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XII. Memoirs of Edward Gibbon, Written by Himself, and a Selection from his Letters, with Occasional Notes and Narrative by John, Lord Sheffield.

MEMOIRS

OF

EDWARD GIBBON.

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MEMOIRS

OF

EDWARD GIBBON

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF

AND

A SELECTION FROM HIS LETTERS

WITH

OCCASIONAL NOTES AND NARRATIVE BY JOHN LORD SHEFFIELD

EDITED BY

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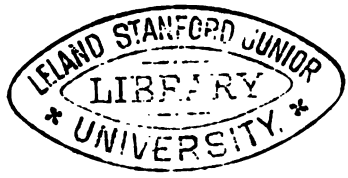

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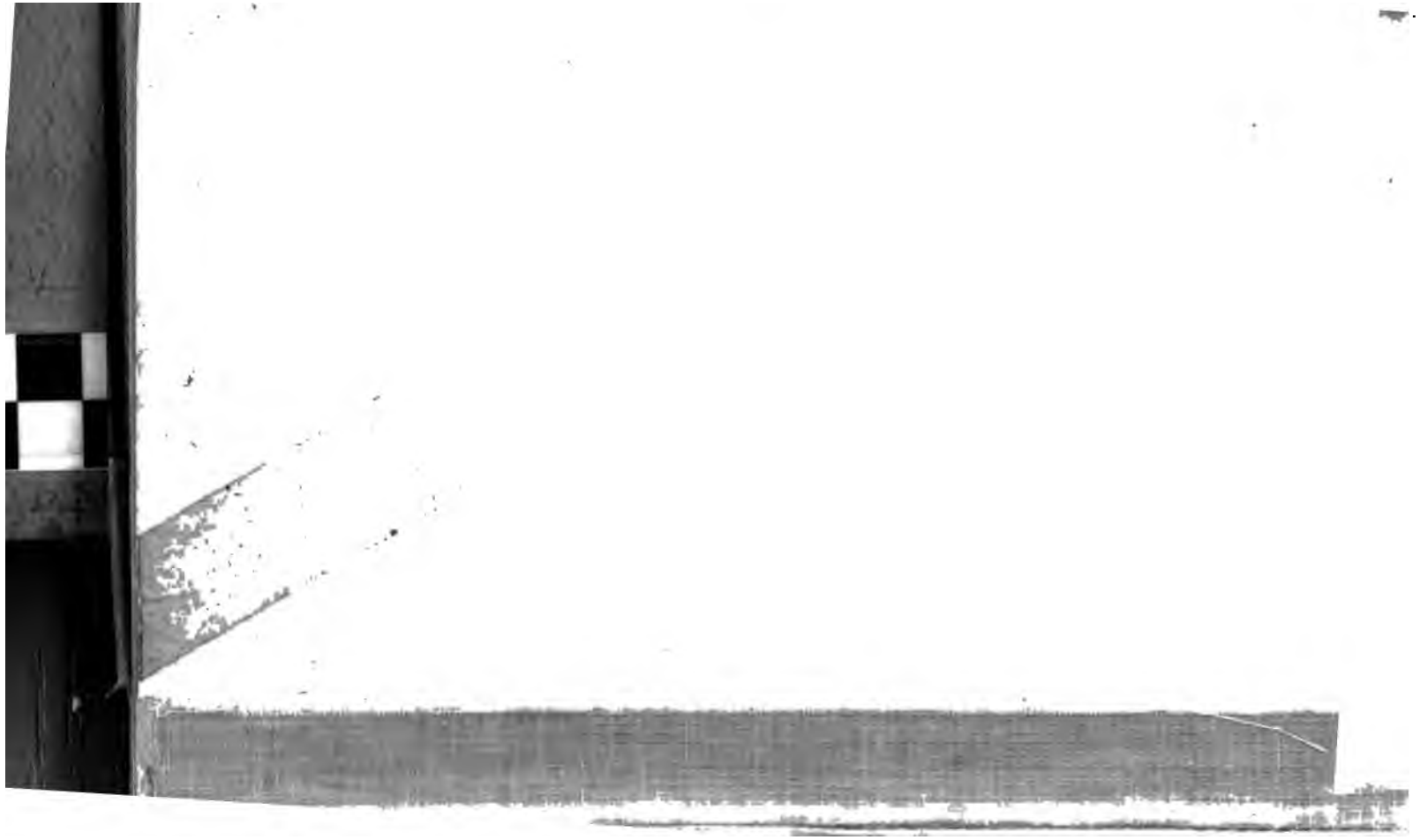

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they were not inexhaustible in quantity, and they were not in his day so loaded with contentious matter as they would be now. When every fact is bored through by at least twelve empty theories, its substance breaks or seems to break, and they who build upon it are proclaimed industriously by the dozen theorists as builders upon sand.

Gibbon took books as he found them, weighed their credibility by the ordinary use of judgment, compared the characters of authors, and carefully pieced the facts that he thought undeniable into his reproduction of the past. He realised to himself, as distinctly as he could, each portion of his History before he wrote. Having done that, he sought to set on paper a true picture of his own conception, using all the skill and eloquence he had in writing sentences that satisfied his sense of truth and pleased the ear of his own time. The wording of each sentence was fully shaped in his own mouth before he wrote it. Then all was revised, condensed, rewritten, and retouched, till it was to his own mind truth told as well as he could tell it, and not wanting in the pomp and circumstance that pleased men then. The whole made a grand picture by a man of genius in the manner of his day, of lasting value for its subject and its art. It was a piece of sound work, with a man's life in it, round in the mouth and unperplexed with any depth of thought or passages where more is meant than meets the ear. Hume gave to the book, of which the first volume appeared when his life was closing, the genuine admiration it deserved; but when he wrote to the publisher, on the 8th of April 1776, in praise of it, he added concerning Adam Smith's "Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations," that appeared in the same year: "Dr. Smith's performance is another excellent work that has come from your press this winter, but I have ventured to tell him that it requires too much thought to be as popular as Mr. Gibbon's." But why quarrel with "The Decline and Fall," which tells just what it professes to tell, because it does not ask us to look deeply into the nature and causes of the Wealth of Nations? Have we poor Israelites, so constantly employed in producing

bricks without straw, opinions without facts, no gratitude for him who brings the straw, who takes infinite pains to collect facts from all quarters, rightly arrange them, lay them in the field for us in well-tied bundles, and leave us to put them to what use we will?

Gibbon's Memoirs owe their lasting interest to their sincerity. They tell the story of his life. Its incidents and its kindly surroundings are part of an accurate, unostentatious history, from which we learn how he became historian, and complete our understanding of his book by a right knowledge of the writer. No book was ever written that is not more clearly understood when we are allowed means of insight into the conditions under which it was written, the writer's character, and his relation to the time in which he lived. Gibbon's Memoirs clearly show us the conditions under which he wrote, his character, and incidentally, of course, without any design in that direction, his relation to the time in which he lived. The conditions of his life placed him in close relation with events of the War of Independence in America and of the French Revolution. He had no more perception of what either of them meant in the world's history than Mrs. Partington had of the strength of the Atlantic when she tried to sweep its tide out with a broom. Gibbon was not alone in that, and he makes no pretension to political insight. We really know him by his Memoirs and his Letters, and we find him worth knowing; the more we see of him the more we like him. In one part of his Memoirs (p. 165 of this edition) he says: "Before I left England in 1783 there were few persons of any eminence in the literary or political world to whom I was a stranger. It would most assuredly be in my power to amuse the reader with a gallery of portraits and a collection of anecdotes. But I have always condemned the practice of transforming a private memorial into a vehicle of satire or praise." The practice is condemned also by the better judgment of the world, that pays no lasting honour to the man who turns a record of his life into a tub in which he washes other people's dirty linen, tattling the while like a washerwoman of all the big folk he has known, and telling any

tales he can about them. There is no real honour for the man who represents his life as a new chapter of a scandalous chronicle, or a new leaf added to "Joe Miller." He has thrown his life as garbage to the pigs, and when they press about there are doubtless very fine pigs in the crowd. Gibbon condemned this way of memoir-writing. It was his own life that he told, with a simple honesty that gives it lasting interest and lasting worth.

The friend who published Gibbon's Memoirs, and supplemented them with letters chiefly to himself and members of his own or Gibbon's family, was John Baker Holroyd, a friend of his youth at Lausanne, who remained his chief friend until death. Holroyd was heir to an Irish barony. The early letters are to J. B. Holroyd, Esq., and change their style after 1781, when his friend, succeeding to that barony, became Lord Sheffield. It was not until eight years after Gibbon's death that his friend was, in 1802, included in the English peerage as Baron Sheffield of Sheffield in Yorkshire, and in 1816, five years before his own death, he was created Earl of Sheffield in Ireland. Lord Sheffield was a country gentleman of good business habits who had some promptings to political ambition, and wrote pamphlets, but obtained no firm footing in political life. He lived at Sheffield Place or Sheffield Park, a fine wooded domain close to the Sussex village of Fletching, which has in its church the Sheffield mausoleum in which Gibbon was buried, and where he lies with a Latin inscription by Dr. Parr to mark his burial-place. In the House or Place, which Lord Sheffield greatly enlarged, and where Gibbon was a frequent and a happy guest, Sir Joshua Reynolds's portrait of Gibbon, referred to in one of the letters of this volume, is still to be seen.

Holroyd, Lord Sheffield, occupied his mind chiefly with the political aspects of commercial questions, and wrote several pamphlets that obtained attention in their time. Of his "Observations on the Commerce of the American States," there was a second edition in 1783, and a third in 1784 with Tables of Imports and Exports from 1700 to 1783. This pamphlet was translated into French in 1789, and it was answered from Phila-

delphia. In 1785 he published "Observations on the Trade and Present State of Ireland." In 1790 he published "Observations on the Project for Abolishing the Slave Trade." In 1791 he published "Observations on the Corn Bill." After his friend's death he read a Report on the Wool Trade at Lewes Wool Fair, wrote pamphlets also on the Poor Laws and the Corn Laws. Gibbon advised him in 1787 to digest all his political and commercial knowledge (England, Ireland, France, America), and with some attention to style and order, to make the whole a classic book "which may preserve your name and benefit your country." But he is remembered only as the friend of Gibbon and the editor of these Memoirs.

It was in 1796, two years after Gibbon's death, that his friend published in two quarto volumes "Miscellaneous Works of Edward Gibbon, Esq., with Memoirs of his Life and Writings, composed by Himself: illustrated from his Letters, with Occasional Notes and Narrative, by John Lord Sheffield." In 1814 Lord Sheffield published a second edition of the "Miscellaneous Works" in five volumes octavo, including new matter which he at the same time published in quarto as a third volume added to the work published in 1796. The contents of the present volume are directly printed from the first of the two volumes published in 1796. The nearness of that date to many incidents referred to in the letters caused omissions from them of personal references which, where they are now obscured, may very well remain so. Why seek to restore allusions to gossip of the town then living and now dead? Lord Sheffield had, like Gibbon, a strong objection to the perpetuation of small-talk, and by his will he positively forbade any further publication of matter contained in his collection of Gibbon's letters and papers. That injunction has been respected. No useful purpose could be served by printing more.

Buriton—spelt by himself Beriton—Gibbon's home in England, is a parish about two miles from Petersfield in Hampshire. Until 1886 the church of the market town of Petersfield itself was a living annexed to the Rectory of Buriton, which is a village with

a population of eight or nine hundred. Gibbon's father, Edward the elder, retired to his estate at Buriton in 1747, after his wife's death. He was member for Petersfield when his son, Edward the younger, was born at Putney, on the 27th of April 1737. Edward the elder had his money from Edward the eldest, a born moneymaker, of whom Gibbon tells the story in his Memoirs. He made the first of his fortunes as an army contractor, was deprived of it for his promotion of the South Sea Bubble, except ten thousand pounds left for subsistence, out of which he made another large fortune before his death in December 1736. Edward Gibbon the elder, son of the eldest, spent some of his father's winnings, and left a diminished, though still a considerable, estate to his son Edward the historian. Edward the elder had also a sister Catherine, who married, and whose daughter, the historian's first cousin, married Lord Eliot, for which reason Gibbon referred in his will to the Right Hon. Lady Eliot of Port Eliot as "his nearest relation on the father's side." Catherine had also a younger sister, Hester, who did not marry, was very religious, is said to have been the Miranda of Law's "Serious Call," and who left her money to her nephew, Edward the historian, when she died.

Gibbon's mother, who had seven children, all of whom, except the future historian, died in early childhood, died herself when her son Edward was only ten years old. She had been before her marriage Judith Porten, and she had a sister Catherine, who did not marry, and was a second mother to the boy. Gibbon loved with all his heart the kind aunt, Catherine Porten, who stood to him in place of mother, and some of his letters to her are here included in Lord Sheffield's collection. She died in 1786.

The Philip Francis with whom young Edward Gibbon was placed at Esher in January 1752 was an Irishman, son of a Dean of Lismore. He was then forty-four years old, and had not found his feet in life. He had been ordained in Ireland, married, and soon afterwards lost his wife. He came to England in 1744, and obtained a rectory in Norfolk, but left it for life in London.

He was keeping and neglecting a school at Esher when Gibbon was placed under his care, and soon withdrawn because he gave no care. He wrote two unsuccessful plays, but at last found footing as private chaplain to Lady Caroline Fox, and went with Charles James Fox to Eton as his private tutor. Thenceforth he throve under Lord Holland's patronage, and one writer has, since his death, vainly imagined that he had discovered in him a part author of the Letters of Junius.

Gibbon has taken care in his Memoir to show how the conception of his book grew in his mind from seed to fruit. The beginning of his interest in its theme dating from the time when he was a boy of fourteen, and picked up to read, when on a visit in Wiltshire, a continuation of Echard's Roman History. Though his boyish impulse a year or two later was to write a book on "the Age of Sesostris," inspired by Voltaire's "Age of Louis XIV.," and other subjects afterwards passed through his mind for the historical work that he was born to write, he returned after all to the theme that had delighted him in boyhood, and that had been through youth and early manhood unconsciously the most attractive subject of his studies.

Having turned Roman Catholic at the end of the fourteen months of his residence at Oxford, with a view to being admitted into the Roman Catholic Church, Gibbon addressed himself, he says, in 1753 (aged sixteen), to Mr. Lewis, a Roman Catholic bookseller in Russell Street, Covent Garden. Pope, as a Roman Catholic, when young and unknown to the world, had taken his "Essay on Criticism" to the same house in 1711 to be "Printed for W. Lewis in Russel Street, Covent Garden."

Edward Gibbon the elder, with an only son, still a boy, who had been getting himself formally admitted into the Roman Church, first tried what his friend and neighbour, David Mallet, could do for him, but, says Gibbon (page 83), "by Mallet's philosophy I was rather scandalised then reclaimed." David Mallet appears afterwards as a critical friend and a giver of useful introductions when Gibbon published in French his early study of literature. Mallet, whose name was Malloch until he settled

in England, and altered it that he might be spared the daily hearing of the English pronunciation of the final "och," was born either of parents who kept an ale-house in the village of Crieff in Perthshire, or of parents in better circumstances who held a farm under the Earl of Perth at Dunruchan, four or five miles from Crieff. He was taught in the village school at Crieff. At the University of Edinburgh, where he earned as tutor while attending lectures, he wrote verse and established friendship with James Thomson, who also wrote verse, afterwards the author of "The Seasons." In 1723, when the Duke of Montrose applied to the authorities of the University for a tutor to educate his sons, David Malloch was recommended, and entered the Duke's family with a salary of £30 a year. This brought him into London society, and in the next year (1724) he obtained credit by his ballad of "William and Margaret," which was printed in Aaron Hill's *Plain Dealer*. In the same year a postscript to a letter to an old friend and teacher said, "My cousin, Mr. Paton, would have me write my name Mallet, for there is not one Englishman that can pronounce it." Mallet remained eight years in the family of the Duke of Montrose. He was afterwards for five years, upon Pope's recommendation, travelling tutor with the son of Mrs. Newsham, a lady who had changed her name, by second marriage, to Knight, and changed it again by a third marriage to Nugent. In November 1733 Mallet joined his pupil in matriculating as a gentleman commoner at St. Mary's Hall, Oxford, and said that his age was twenty-eight on his last birthday. In the following spring he asked for and obtained a diploma of Master of Arts from the University of Edinburgh. This he at once used, indeed before the diploma was completed, in obtaining the M.A. of Oxford, about four months after he had matriculated. He had it ten days before the formal completion of the Edinburgh diploma, and the next day after the University of Edinburgh had agreed to give it him. In 1740 the "Masque of Alfred," by David Mallet and James Thomson, was acted at Cliſden before the Prince and Princess of Wales. It contains the song of "Rule Britannia," probably by Mallet, possibly

by Thomson. Mallet wrote also a Life of Bacon for an edition of Bacon's works published in 1740. Mallet's first wife, of whom nothing is known, died in January 1742, and in the following October the *Gentleman's Magazine* announced his second marriage, October 7, 1742: "David Mallet, Esq., Under-Secretary to the Prince of Wales, to Miss Lucy Elstob, with £10,000." In 1748 he was deprived of the pension of £100 a year that he had been receiving from the Prince of Wales. Mallet made himself agreeable to Bolingbroke, shared his philosophical onipions, was made his literary executor, and published in 1754 that edition of Lord Bolingbroke's works in five volumes 4to, upon which Samuel Johnson said that Bolingbroke had "loaded a blunderbuss against religion, and left half-a-crown to a beggarly Scotchman to pull the trigger after he was dead."

It was just at this time, when Mallet was completing his work upon Bolingbroke's papers, that Edward Gibbon the elder, his friend and neighbour at Putney—Mallet was a notably good talker—asked him to try whether he could bring his son, Edward Gibbon the younger, back from the Church of Rome. Mallet studied courtliness of speech and manner, dressed fastidiously, kept a French cook, and in course of time his small and slender frame became, as Gibbon's became, enormously stout. A worthy Scot who dined with him in 1764 wrote home concerning him: "We spent an evening last week with Mallet, who is grown to an enormous size, exactly the shape of a barrel, but looks well, and eats and drinks more than you ever saw him."

Mallet's philosophy proving fruitless, Edward Gibbon the elder tried as a cure for his son a long course of Swiss Protestantism. He threatened to disinherit him, reduced his pocket-money, and banished him for five years to Lausanne, where he was to live in the house of a Calvinist minister, M. Pavillard, who was to carry on his education and convince him of his error in Church matters. Young Gibbon, after a journey of eleven days, entered the house of M. Pavillard on the 30th of June 1753, his age then being about two months over sixteen. He left in August 1758, when in his twenty-second year. He was a bookish boy, with a mind of

his own, who counted up his readings with a miserly enjoyment of the heap they made, who read already pen in hand, thought for himself, and was not only bold, as a clever boy is always, in assertion of his own opinions, glad to argue, eager to inquire, but joined to his intellectual powers a most kindly nature. No one can read Gibbon's Memoir of himself, and his letters, without noticing the cheerful friendliness that is implied constantly in their matter and their manner, the capacity they show for calm, lasting affection. M. Pavillard, in whose house he was placed, and who had other pupils, formed a right judgment of the youth, brought out his kindliness, respected his activity of mind, aided with tact its independent working. When Gibbon wanted an argument upon the questions between Rome and Geneva he argued, and when Gibbon did not invite argument he let him alone. There were fellow-pupils also ready for argument, and especially one, Deyverdun, with whom Gibbon formed his strongest friendship, lasting until death. Next to the friendship with Deyverdun was that with John Baker Holroyd, which was also formed in youth at Lausanne. Deyverdun, with whom he lived afterwards in one house in a domestic intimacy more affectionate than that between some husbands and some wives, died before Gibbon. Holroyd survived him, and with goodwill and good sense published the unfinished autobiography, with familiar letters that give to the world a faithful picture of his friend. The portrait of Gibbon by Sir Joshua Reynolds, which is still at Sheffield Place, cost fifty pounds, and Gibbon thought that much. But no portrait of Gibbon painted from without can equal in value this one, painted from within. Gibbon, in his young days at Lausanne, reasoned himself, with quiet help from Pastor Pavillard, back from Romanism into Protestantism, and through Protestantism to the doubts that had been growing since the first years of the eighteenth century.

In this time also of his pupillage at Lausanne, Gibbon fell in love with a pastor's daughter, Susanne Curchod, daughter of the minister of Crassy. That was in 1757, when he was in his twenty-first year, and within less than a year of his return to

England. Susanne Curchod was the cynosure of neighbouring eyes; the minister of Crassy saw in the amiable young Gibbon, heir to an estate in England, a sufficient match for his daughter. Gibbon paid a visit or two to the Parsonage, and all was arranged subject to the consent of the youth's father. But in the eyes of that gentleman, whose own life was not of the wisest, but who had the conventional ideas proper to a Tory country gentleman of the eighteenth century, marriage of his son and heir to the daughter of a poor Swiss Protestant pastor was as bad as going to the wrong church for worship. He would not consent, he had the power of the purse, and his son yielded. Susanne Curchod was for a time unhappy. Then her father was consoled by her marriage to a man much wealthier than Gibbon; and she, by the love of a good man who filled her home with happiness. She became the wife of M. Necker, and the mother of Madame de Staël. The young love between her and Gibbon settled down into a sober, thorough kindness, and in his after-life M. and Madame Necker took their place among the most affectionate of Gibbon's friends. The closest of the friends not bound to him by ties of blood have now been named. Of members of the family, the best beloved was his mother's unmarried sister, Catherine Porten, his Aunt Kitty, who, when he was motherless, and even before, in his diseased and feeble childhood—the one child that survived of seven born—had been as the best of mothers to him; who, when she was left in the world without means and set up a school for children, had been his first teacher; of whom he wrote to Lord Sheffield after her death in 1786, that a thousand sad and tender remembrances rushed upon his mind. "To her care I am indebted in earliest infancy for the preservation of my life and health. I was a puny child, neglected by my mother, starved by my nurse, and of whose being very little care or expectation was entertained; without her maternal vigilance I should either have been in my grave, or imperfectly lived a crooked, rickety monster, a burden to myself and others. To her instruction I owe the first rudiments of knowledge, the first exercise of reason, and a taste for books which is still the glory

and pleasure of my life; and though she taught me neither language nor science, she was certainly the most useful preceptor I ever had. As I grew up, an intercourse of thirty years endeared her to me, as the faithful friend and the agreeable companion. You have seen with what freedom and confidence we lived together, and have often admired her character and conversation, which could alike please the young and the old. All this is now lost, finally and irrecoverably lost! I will agree with my lady that the immortality of the soul is at some times a very comfortable doctrine."

One other home friend was Gibbon's second mother in another sense. His father married again while he was under discipline at Lausanne, and the second marriage seemed to the son to be in some degree another mark of displeasure. But the second wife had no children of her own to draw her heart away from the kindly youth who came home from Lausanne supposing that he should not find a friend in her. They became the best of friends, and Mrs. Gibbon, as his father's widow, represented to the last for him in his affections all that was left of his first home. When she was an old woman and he visited her, he gave himself up willingly to nine consecutive hours of *tête-à-tête* companionship, and told Lord Sheffield that he liked it. These intimate friends and relations are the correspondents to whom most of the letters in this volume are addressed, to whom Gibbon speaks at his ease and shows his heart with its desires and its affections. There are also a few letters arising out of the success of his History, and the controversy raised over his chapters on the early growth of Christianity. They show how Hume and Robertson welcomed the appearance of a new and real historian who would share their laurels, and with how much human kindness the ablest of the men who argued publicly against him honoured his sincerity, and, when they had done what they believed to be their duty, carried no bitterness of controversy into the private relations of life, and joined with him in equal friendliness. They are ill-taught who have not learnt to respect honest differences of opinion, and to oppose what they believe to be wrong doctrines with all the

power they have of argument, and yet without ill-will or discourtesy towards any honest man who holds them.

Gibbon's five years at Lausanne, from his sixteenth to his twenty-second year, made French almost a mother-tongue to him. He learnt to think in French. This habit must have been broken during the twenty-five years of his residence in England, from 1758 until 1783, when he returned to settle for the rest of his life at Lausanne. After 1783 this habit probably returned, as French once more became the language of his daily life.

After the Memoir and the letters that completed it, which, with the account of Gibbon's death, are given in this volume without any omissions, Lord Sheffield began his appended collections of letters, with letters in French or Latin from or to learned men whom young Gibbon drew into correspondence while yet at Lausanne. From one he sought discussion of a passage in Livy, from another light on the philosophy of Locke, from another a discussion upon difficulties in the epitome by Justinus of the history of the Assyrian, Persian, Grecian, Macedonian, and Roman Empires by Trogus Pompeius. These letters I omit, and begin with his letter from Lausanne to his Aunt Kitty, Miss ——, or as men then wrote of adult spinsters, Mrs. —— Porten. This letter is No. X. in Lord Sheffield's Appendix. From this letter, which becomes No. I. in the present volume, the original sequence is unbroken and unabridged to the letter numbered CVI. on page 410 of the present volume. To this point, therefore, the number of any letter can be brought in accordance with Lord Sheffield's numbering by adding nine to it. There is next omission of a letter from Dr. Robertson, whose friendliness has been already represented, and from whom there follows presently another letter of more interest. The letters printed by Lord Sheffield are then given without omission until No. CXXIV. inclusive, and the original number of a letter from CVII. in this volume to No. CXXIV. inclusive, is obtained by adding ten to the number given here. There are then occasional omissions. A trivial letter from Lord Hardwick and another letter from Dr. Robertson are passed over, and half a dozen controversial letters between Gibbon and

Dr. Priestley, in what Gibbon found to be a disagreeable altercation, which he declined to continue. These are followed by six or eight letters very different in character, beginning with the long affectionate letter in French to Deyverdun, which brought in reply the suggestion of a common home for the two friends at Lausanne, a marriage of men's lives. It was the correspondence that determined Gibbon to leave London and settle at Lausanne. These charming letters are in French. The purport and issue of them will have been found already set forth in the Memoir. In the rest of the original collection there are about forty letters, from which I have only been able to make a small selection. In short, then, there have been no omissions from the Memoir, or from the letters added by Lord Sheffield to complete the Memoir, but from Lord Sheffield's Appendix of two hundred and ten letters to or from Gibbon a few have been omitted in transforming a quarto of 703 pages into an octavo of 448.

Lord Sheffield wrote in the preface to his volumes that "the most important part consists of Memoirs of Mr. Gibbon's Life and Writings, a work which he seems to have projected with peculiar solicitude and attention, and of which he left six different sketches, all in his own handwriting. One of these sketches, the most diffuse and circumstantial, so far as it proceeds, ends at the time when he quitted Oxford. Another at the year 1764, when he travelled to Italy. A third, at his father's death in 1770. A fourth, which he continued to a short time after his return to Lausanne, in 1788, appears in the form of Annals, much less detailed than the others. The two remaining sketches are still more imperfect. It is difficult to discover the order in which these several pieces were written, but there is reason to believe that the most copious was the last. From all these the following Memoirs have been carefully selected and put together.

"My hesitation in giving these Memoirs to the world arose, principally, from the circumstance of Mr. Gibbon's appearing, in some respect, not to have been satisfied with them, as he had so frequently varied their form: yet, notwithstanding this diffidence, the compositions, though unfinished, are so excellent, that they

may justly entitle my friend to appear as his own biographer, rather than to have their task undertaken by any other person less qualified for it.

"This opinion has rendered me anxious to publish the present Memoirs without any unnecessary delay; for I am persuaded that the author of them cannot be made to appear in a truer light than he does in the following pages. In them, and in his different Letters, which I have added, will be found a complete picture of his talents, his disposition, his studies, and his attainments.

"Those slight variations of character which naturally arose in the progress of his life will be unfolded in a series of Letters, selected from a correspondence between him and myself, which continued full thirty years, and ended with his death.

"It is to be lamented that all the sketches of the Memoirs, except that composed in the form of Annals, and which seems rather designed as heads for a future work, cease about twenty years before Mr. Gibbon's death; and consequently that we have the least detailed account of the most interesting part of his life. His correspondence during that period will, in great measure, supply the deficiency. It will be separated from the Memoirs and placed in an Appendix, that those who are not disposed to be pleased with the repetitions, familiarities, and trivial circumstances of epistolary writing may not be embarrassed by it. By many the Letters will be found a very interesting part of the present publication. They will prove how pleasant, friendly, and amiable Mr. Gibbon was in private life. . . . Few men, I believe, have ever so fully unveiled their own character, by a minute narrative of their sentiments and pursuits, as Mr. Gibbon will here be found to have done; not with study and labour—not with an affected frankness—but with a genuine confession of his little foibles and peculiarities, and a good-humoured and natural display of his own conduct and opinions." So wrote Lord Sheffield, and posterity is of the same mind now, within six years of a century after those sentences were written.

One foible at last shortened his life. He had a rupture at the age of twenty-four, and went to an eminent surgeon for advice. There was a little doubt whether it was hernia or hydrocele—he died of a complication of both—and the surgeon asked him to call again. He did not call again, he did not take advice from any one, he did not mention it to his most intimate friends when its existence became obvious to them, he did not allow his valet to make any allusion to it, and let it increase enormously until it was about to kill him. This was the cause of his avoidance of horse exercise, and of a more sedentary habit than that of the healthy student, whence came at last the enormous corpulence, although he had, with a large head, a body slender in its build. The chin expanded till Gibbon's mouth was described by George Colman as a small hole in the middle of his face. In the last months tapping the hydrocele only made more room for the descent of bowel; the whole of the thick apron of fat known as the omentum descended; then came ulceration, and a pulling downward of the stomach itself produced the symptoms that immediately preceded death. But for this infirmity of body, made more serious by what we must consider an infirmity of character, Gibbon's need of affectionate companionship would probably have caused him to marry. After the death of his friend Deyverdun he felt the want of an affectionate companion, and he even spoke of marriage in one letter, though it was only to put the thought away. He was but twenty-one when he had sought to marry Mdlle. Curchod.

Rousseau wrote some false sentiment about Gibbon's way of assent to his father's interference with his engagement, or half-engagement, to Susanne Curchod. She liked him, and was disappointed, but she was more than consoled in 1764 when she became the wife of the rich Swiss Protestant banker, who afterwards in Paris struggled honestly as a financier to avert the Revolution in France; and the relation of warm friendship afterwards established between Gibbon and the Neckers is an answer to all tattle. Jacques Necker was seven or eight years older than Gibbon. A native of Geneva, and one of its council of two hundred, Necker was sent as ambassador to Paris, and obtained

there in 1765 the office of syndic to the East India Company, which he successfully defended when it was threatened with destruction. In October 1776 he was made, by the minister Maurepas, Director, and in February 1777 Controller-General of Finance. He held that office until May 1781, brought order into the public accounts and money into the exchequer, but allowed it to be wasted upon war supplies for the share of France in the dispute between England and America. He instituted the *Compte Rendu*, the first public financial statement known in France. It revealed abuses, and made enemies. His policy was too honest for those who throve upon corruption. For opposition to the policy of a successor, Necker was forbidden in 1787 to live within twenty miles of Paris; but on the 26th of August 1788 the perils of the country caused his recall from his home at St. Ouen to take office again. It was too late. Once he resigned, and returned to office; once he was dismissed, and returned to office. He would have liked to shape for France a constitution similar to that of England. Mirabeau condemned his skill in finance as a skill unsuited to the times. After the events of October 1789 Necker's career was at an end. He retired to Switzerland, and lived at Copet with his wife, who had distinguished herself in Paris as friend of the poor, and one who held her own in the most intellectual society. She had written some pamphlets upon social questions, establishment of hospitals, hasty burials, divorce. She died at Copet in 1795, six years before her husband, one year after Gibbon. Her daughter, Anne Louise Germaine Necker, born in 1766, married the Baron de Staël Holstein, Swedish ambassador in France, and was famous in her day as Madame de Staël.

Gibbon's letters contain so many allusions to current history that it may be as well to complete this little collection of notes in aid of the reading of them with a short dated list of the chief public events referred to in them, with an associated date or two in Gibbon's life:—

1753. June 30, Gibbon, aged 16, began his first stay at Lausanne.
1758. In August he returned to England.
1759. Gibbon became a major in the Hampshire militia. September 13. Capture of Quebec and death of General Wolfe.

1760. Accession of George III., aged 22.

1761. Gibbon, aged 24, published his *Essai sur l'Étude de la Littérature*, finished in February 1759. Reprinted at Geneva in 1762. An English translation of it in 1764.

1763. February 10. Peace signed at Paris between England, France, and Spain. George Grenville succeeded the Earl of Bute as Premier. The thirteen American colonies contained not quite two million of inhabitants, including slaves and servants.

1764. Duties levied in the American Colonies upon sugar and other articles of colonial import, on the ground that "it is just and necessary that a revenue be raised in America for defraying the expenses of defending, protecting, and securing the same." Gibbon went in April to Italy. On the 15th of October the first suggestion of his "History of the Decline and Fall of Rome" came to Gibbon as he stood among the ruins of the Capitol (see p. 151).

1765. March 22. Stamp Act passed, imposing duties in the American Colonies on all business papers and newspapers. June 25. Gibbon returned from his journey to Italy, aged 28. First Congress of the American Colonies met in October, and dated on the 19th a Declaration of Rights and Liberties. July. Lord Rockingham, Premier, made Edmund Burke his Secretary. Burke first entered the House of Commons as member for Wendover.

1766. In accordance with Burke's counsel, Lord Rockingham's Ministry sought to conciliate the American Colonies by repeal of the Stamp Act, and to satisfy sentiment at home with a Bill declaring the right of Parliament to tax the Colonies. The Rockingham Administration, quickly destroyed by party feuds, went out on the 30th of July. The elder Pitt then formed a Government, but his health was much broken. He was created Earl of Chatham, and Charles Townshend, his Chancellor of the Exchequer, in his absence from direct control, again carried taxations against the colonists.

1767. A Tea Act passed, imposing duties upon tea and other imports into the American Colonies, to provide for payment of troops and salaries for royal governors and royal judges. The New York Assembly was also declared incapable of legislation until it obeyed the Quartering Act of 1765. Death of Charles Townshend, who was succeeded by Lord North as Chancellor of the Exchequer. Gibbon's "Introduction to a History of Switzerland," read before a literary society of foreigners, not well received by them, and subject abandoned. Gibbon and Deyverdun joined in publishing a first volume of *Mémoires Littéraires de la Grande Bretagne.*

1768. A second and last volume of the *Mémoires Littéraires.* Deyverdun appointed, through Gibbon's good offices, travelling tutor to Sir Richard Worsley for four years, after which he was to receive a pension of £100 a year for life. A General Election in England. Boroughs bought up by rich East and West Indians at from three to five thousand pounds apiece. The contested election for Northampton cost the opposing candidates at least £30,000 each. Wilkes elected for Middlesex, and contests thereupon. British troops ordered to Boston. No quarters provided for them. Chatham withdrew from the Ministry in England. Lord Grafton Premier. Letters of Junius till 1772.

1769. An Act passed directing that all cases of treason in the Colonies should be tried in the mother-country. "Our lordly masters in Great Britain," said Washington, "will be satisfied with nothing less than the deprivation of American freedom. That no man should scruple or hesitate for a moment to use arms in the defence of so valuable a blessing is clearly my opinion. Yet arms, I would beg leave to add, should be the last resource." The Colonies demanded total repeal of Townshend's Act.

1770. From the end of January, Lord North Premier. Bloodshed at Boston in a mob quarrel with soldiers. The Assembly of Virginia moving against traffic in slaves, the Royal Governor was directed to consent to no laws that affected the interests of slave-owners. Gibbon published, against a theory in War-

burton's "Divine Legation," his "Critical Observations on the Sixth Book of the Æneid." November 10, Gibbon's father died.

1771. The State of New York appointed Edmund Burke its agent.

1772. Gibbon, aged 35, settled in London at 7 Bentinck Street, Cavendish Square.

1773. Burke opposed the King's government by a Cabinet within a Cabinet in "Thoughts on the Causes of the Present Discontents." Three tea vessels at Boston boarded and their cargoes thrown overboard.

1774. April 19. Burke's speech on American Taxation. The Boston Port Bill closed the harbour to imports and exports. General Gage, commander-in-chief of the British forces in the Colonies, made Governor of Massachusetts, and an Act for better regulating the government of Massachusetts Bay deprived the colony of its liberties. A Continental Congress of the American Colonies met at Philadelphia on the 5th of September. It signed the Articles of an American Association on the 20th of October. Louis XIV. of France died, aged 64, on the 10th of May this year, and Louis XV., aged 20, became King. Maurepas joined Turgot to the Ministry. Gibbon joined Dr. Johnson's literary club. October 11. Gibbon, aged 37, obtained from Lord Eliot a seat in Parliament at Liskeard in Cornwall, and supported Lord North's policy. October 27. Organisation of the Militia by the Provincial Congress of Massachusetts.

1775. March 22. Burke proposed in vain his thirteen resolutions for reconcilement with America. Burke's speech on American conciliation. Dr. Johnson's "Taxation no Tyranny." April 19. First encounter between colonists and 1700 British troops at Lexington. The British were defeated, with nearly 300 killed, wounded, and prisoners. June 15. Washington commander-in-chief of an American continental army. In August, Georgia having joined, the thirteen colonies were united.

1776. Publication of the first volume of Gibbon's History. March 17. General Howe, with twenty-two regiments, evacuated Boston, which had been besieged by Washington for eight months and a half, with not thirty rounds of musket-cartridges to a man. July 4. Declaration of Independence. The thirteen united colonies formed into the "United States of America." Establishment of the several Assemblies and Councils of the States, begun in 1776, was completed in 1777. April to December 1776. Losses by the Americans of New York, Lake Champlain, and the Lower Hudson, Newport. In December, Washington was made Dictator. In October, Necker succeeded Turgot as Director of Finance in France. August 25. David Hume died.

1777. May to October, Gibbon in Paris, much with the Neckers. Lafayette joined the Americans, and was appointed by Congress, July 31, a major-general. Evacuation of New Jersey by the British, who proceeded to operate with the two armies of Generals Burgoyne and St. Clair for cutting off New England from communication with other States. September 11. General Howe defeated the Americans, and on the 26th took possession of Philadelphia. September 19, October 7. Two victories of the Americans at Saratoga, after which nearly 6000 British troops laid down their arms.

1778. Treaty proposed in 1776 ratified in 1778, May 5, between France and the United States. June 18. Sir Henry Clinton evacuated Philadelphia. In July, M. Girard, first Minister of France to the United States, was brought in a fleet and army under the Comte D'Estaing, whose first operations were not successful.

1779. In June, Spain joined France against England, nominally on behalf of the United States. France and Spain then had sixty sail of the line besides frigates in the Channel. Admiral Hardy, with only half the number of ships, withdrew into Plymouth. The French had 50,000 men at Havre and St. Malo ready to embark for England. The threatened invasion was averted only by the stupidity of those who were to direct it. In the summer of this year Gibbon, aged 42, was appointed one of the Lords Commissioners of Trade and Plantations, salary £750.

1780. May 12. Charleston taken by the British, and Lord Cornwallis then held South Carolina. September 1. Parliament was dissolved. Eliot having joined the Opposition, Gibbon could not remain member for Liskeard.
1781. Necker resigned in May. Second and third volumes of the "History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire" early in the year. June 25. Lord North put Gibbon in Parliament again, at a bye-election, as member for Lymington. October 19. Lord Cornwallis surrendered at Yorktown, with 7500 British troops, hopelessly beset by 9000 Americans and 7000 French, besides a fleet. "O God!" said Lord North, when he heard of this, "it is all over—all over."
1782. Abolition of the offices of Lords Commissioners of Trade. Gibbon, led to expect compensation by some other place, sought to be appointed Secretary of Embassy at Paris. He was writing his fourth volume, and desired to work in peace.
1783. Gibbon settled at Lausanne with his friend Deyverdun in a house with a garden of four acres, given to Deyverdun by an aunt, Deyverdun finding the house and Gibbon the housekeeping. September 3. Definitive Treaty of Peace signed at Paris.
1784. January 4. Peace ratified by the Congress of the United States. In June, vol. iv. of Gibbon's History finished at Lausanne.
1785. June 2. John Adams, the first American ambassador, introduced to George III.
1786. In May the fifth volume of the History finished at Lausanne. The debt of France stood at 1,600,000,000 livres. There was a yearly deficit of 114,000,000, with an arrear of 600,000,000. Calonne advised Louis XVI. to call an Assembly of Notables.
1787. February 22. Louis XVI. opened the Assembly of Notables. April. Calonne dismissed. On the 27th of June the last volume of Gibbon's History finished in a summer-house at Lausanne.
1788. Gibbon visited England for the publication of the three volumes that completed his History. They were published on the 27th of April, his fifty-first birthday. June. Gibbon was present at the impeachment of Warren Hastings. He returned to Lausanne. August 26. Necker restored to power at Versailles. He recalled the Parliament, restored the provincial Parliaments, and summoned the States-General for January 1789.
1789. July 4. The death of Deyverdun at Lausanne. Gibbon alone in his house. July 14. Fall of the Bastille.
1791. Lord Sheffield and his family visited Gibbon at Lausanne.
1793. Lady Sheffield died in April. Gibbon hurried to his friend. Reached England in May.
1794. January 16. Gibbon died in London.

Gibbon's pleasant home at Lausanne is no more to be seen. The house is gone, and the hotel has been built on part of the ground that was its garden.

MEMOIRS

OF

MY LIFE AND WRITINGS

BY

EDWARD GIBBON.

MEMOIRS

OF

MY LIFE AND WRITINGS.

IN the fifty-second year of my age, after the completion of an arduous and successful work, I now propose to employ some moments of my leisure in reviewing the simple transactions of a private and literary life. Truth, naked, unblushing truth, the first virtue of more serious history, must be the sole recommendation of this personal narrative. The style shall be simple and familiar: but style is the image of character; and the habits of correct writing may produce, without labour or design, the appearance of art and study. My own amusement is my motive, and will be my reward; and if these sheets are communicated to some discreet and indulgent friends, they will be secreted from the public eye till the author shall be removed beyond the reach of criticism or ridicule.[1]

[1] This passage is found in one only of the six sketches, and in that which seems to have been the first written, and which was laid aside among loose papers. Mr. Gibbon, in his communications with me on the subject of his memoirs—a subject which he had never mentioned to any other person—expressed a determination of publishing them in his lifetime, and never appears to have departed from that resolution, excepting in one of his letters annexed, in which he intimates a doubt, though rather carelessly, whether in his time, or at any time, they would meet the eye of the public. In a conversation, however, not long before his death, it was suggested to him that if he should make them a full image of his mind, he would not have nerves to publish them in his lifetime, and therefore that they should be posthumous. He answered, rather eagerly, that he was determined to publish them *in his lifetime.*—S.

A lively desire of knowing and of recording our ancestors so generally prevails, that it must depend on the influence of some common principle in the minds of men. We seem to have lived in the persons of our forefathers; it is the labour and reward of vanity to extend the term of this ideal longevity. Our imagination is always active to enlarge the narrow circle in which Nature has confined us. Fifty or an hundred years may be allotted to an individual, but we step forwards beyond death with such hopes as religion and philosophy will suggest; and we fill up the silent vacancy that precedes our birth by associating ourselves to the authors of our existence. Our calmer judgment will rather tend to moderate than to suppress the pride of an ancient and worthy race. The satirist may laugh, the philosopher may preach, but reason herself will respect the prejudices and habits which have been consecrated by the experience of mankind.

Wherever the distinction of birth is allowed to form a superior order in the State, education and example should always, and will often, produce among them a dignity of sentiment and propriety of conduct which is guarded from dishonour by their own and the public esteem. If we read of some illustrious line so ancient that it has no beginning, so worthy that it ought to have no end, we sympathise in its various fortunes; nor can we blame the generous enthusiasm, or even the harmless vanity, of those who are allied to the honours of its name. For my own part, could I draw my pedigree from a general, a statesman, or a celebrated author, I should study their lives with the diligence of filial love. In the investigation of past events, our curiosity is stimulated by the immediate or indirect reference to ourselves; but in the estimate of honour we should learn to value the gifts of Nature above those of fortune; to esteem in our ancestors the qualities that best promote the interests of society; and to pronounce the descendant of a king less truly noble than the offspring of a man of genius, whose writings will instruct or delight the latest posterity. The family of Confucius is, in my opinion, the most illustrious in the world. After a painful ascent of eight or ten centuries, our barons and princes of Europe are lost in the darkness of the Middle Ages;

but, in the vast equality of the empire of China, the posterity of Confucius have maintained, above 2200 years, their peaceful honours and perpetual succession. The chief of the family is still revered by the sovereign and the people as the lively image of the wisest of mankind. The nobility of the Spencers has been illustrated and enriched by the trophies of Marlborough; but I exhort them to consider the "Fairy Queen" as the most precious jewel of their coronet. I have exposed my private feelings, as I shall always do, without scruple or reserve. That these sentiments are just, or at least natural, I am inclined to believe, since I do not feel myself interested in the cause; for I can derive from my ancestors neither glory nor shame.

Yet a sincere and simple narrative of my own life may amuse some of my leisure hours, but it will subject me, and perhaps with justice, to the imputation of vanity. I may judge, however, from the experience both of past and of the present times, that the public are always curious to know the men who have left behind them any image of their minds. The most scanty accounts of such men are compiled with diligence and perused with eagerness; and the student of every class may derive a lesson or an example from the lives most similar to his own. My name may hereafter be placed among the thousand articles of a Biographia Britannica; and I must be conscious that no one is so well qualified as myself to describe the series of my thoughts and actions. The authority of my masters, of the grave Thuanus and the philosophic Hume, might be sufficient to justify my design; but it would not be difficult to produce a long list of ancients and moderns who in various forms have exhibited their own portraits. Such portraits are often the most interesting, and sometimes the only interesting parts of their writings; and if they be sincere, we seldom complain of the minuteness or prolixity of these personal memorials. The lives of the younger Pliny, of Petrarch, and of Erasmus, are expressed in the epistles which they themselves have given to the world. The essays of Montaigne and Sir William Temple bring us home to the houses and bosoms of the authors: we smile without contempt at the headstrong passions of Benvenuto

Cellini and the gay follies of Colley Cibber. The confessions of St. Austin and Rousseau disclose the secrets of the human heart; the commentaries of the learned Huet have survived his evangelical demonstration; and the memoirs of Goldoni are more truly dramatic than his Italian comedies. The heretic and the churchman are strongly marked in the characters and fortunes of Whiston and Bishop Newton; and even the dulness of Michael de Marolles and Anthony Wood acquires some value from the faithful representation of men and manners. That I am equal or superior to some of these, the effects of modesty or affectation cannot force me to dissemble.

My family is originally derived from the county of Kent. The southern district, which borders on Sussex and the sea, was formerly overspread with the great forest Anderida, and even now retains the denomination of the *Weald*, or Woodland. In this district, and in the hundred and parish of Rolvenden, the Gibbons were possessed of lands in the year 1326, and the elder branch of the family, without much increase or diminution of property, still adheres to its native soil. Fourteen years after the first appearance of his name, John Gibbon is recorded as the Marmorarius or architect of King Edward the Third. The strong and stately castle of Queensborough, which guarded the entrance of the Medway, was a monument of his skill; and the grant of an hereditary toll on the passage from Sandwich to Stonar, in the Isle of Thanet, is the reward of no vulgar artist. In the visitations of the heralds the Gibbons are frequently mentioned. They held the rank of esquire in an age when that title was less promiscuously assumed. One of them, under the reign of Queen Elizabeth, was captain of the militia of Kent; and a free school, in the neighbouring town of Benenden, proclaims the charity and opulence of its founder. But time, or their own obscurity, has cast a veil of oblivion over the virtues and vices of my Kentish ancestors; their character or station confined them to the labours and pleasures of a rural life; nor is it in my power to follow the advice of the poet in an inquiry after a name—

"Go! search it there, where to be born and die,
Of rich and poor makes all the history."

So recent is the institution of our parish registers. In the beginning of the seventeenth century, a younger branch of the Gibbons of Rolvenden migrated from the country to the city; and from this branch I do not blush to descend. The law requires some abilities; the church imposes some restraints; and before our army and navy, our civil establishments, and Indian Empire, had opened so many paths of fortune, the mercantile profession was more frequently chosen by youths of a liberal race and education, who aspired to create their own independence. Our most respectable families have not disdained the counting-house, or even the shop; their names are enrolled in the Livery and Companies of London; and in England, as well as in the Italian commonwealths, heralds have been compelled to declare that gentility is not degraded by the exercise of trade.

The armorial ensigns which, in the times of chivalry, adorned the crest and shield of the soldier, are now become an empty decoration, which every man, who has money to build a carriage, may paint according to his fancy on the panels. My family arms are the same which were borne by the Gibbons of Kent in an age when the College of Heralds religiously guarded the distinctions of blood and name: a lion rampant gardant, between three scallop-shells argent, on a field azure.[1] I should not, however, have been tempted to blazon my coat of arms were it not connected with a whimsical anecdote. About the reign of James the First, the three harmless scallop-shells were changed by Edmund Gibbon, Esq., into three ogresses, or female cannibals, with a design of stigmatising three ladies, his kinswomen, who had provoked him by an unjust law-suit. But this singular mode of revenge, for which he obtained the sanction of Sir William Segar, king-at-arms, soon expired with its author; and, on his

[1] The father of Lord Chancellor Hardwicke married an heiress of this family of Gibbon. The Chancellor's escutcheon in the Temple Hall quarters the arms of Gibbon, as does also that, in Lincoln's Inn Hall, of Charles York, Chancellor in 1770.—S.

own monument in the Temple Church, the monsters vanish, and the three scallop-shells resume their proper and hereditary place.

Our alliances by marriage it is not disgraceful to mention. The chief honour of my ancestry is James Fienes, Baron Say and Seale, and Lord High Treasurer of England, in the reign of Henry the Sixth; from whom by the Phelips, the Whetnalls, and the Cromers, I am lineally descended in the eleventh degree. His dismission and imprisonment in the Tower were insufficient to appease the popular clamour; and the Treasurer, with his son-in-law Cromer, was beheaded (1450), after a mock trial by the Kentish insurgents. The black list of his offences, as it is exhibited in Shakespeare, displays the ignorance and envy of a plebeian tyrant. Besides the vague reproaches of selling Maine and Normandy to the Dauphin, the Treasurer is specially accused of luxury, for riding on a foot-cloth; and of treason, for speaking French, the language of our enemies. "Thou hast most traitorously corrupted the youth of the realm," says Jack Cade to the unfortunate lord, "in erecting a grammar-school; and whereas before our forefathers had no other books than the score and the tally, thou hast caused printing to be used; and, contrary to the king, his crown, and dignity, thou hast built a paper-mill. It will be proved to thy face, that thou hast men about thee, who usually talk of a noun and a verb, and such abominable words, as no Christian ear can endure to hear." Our dramatic poet is generally more attentive to character than to history; and I much fear that the art of printing was not introduced into England till several years after Lord Say's death: but of some of these meritorious crimes I should hope to find my ancestor guilty; and a man of letters may be proud of his descent from a patron and martyr of learning.

In the beginning of the last century Robert Gibbon, Esq., of Rolvenden in Kent (who died in 1618), had a son of the same name of Robert, who settled in London, and became a member of the Clothworkers' Company. His wife was a daughter of the Edgars, who flourished about 400 years in the county of Suffolk, and produced an eminent and wealthy serjeant-at-law,

Sir Gregory Edgar, in the reign of Henry the Seventh. Of the sons of Robert Gibbon (who died in 1643), Matthew did not aspire above the station of a linen-draper in Leadenhall Street; but John has given to the public some curious memorials of his existence, his character, and his family. He was born on the 3rd of November in the year 1629; his education was liberal, at a grammar-school, and afterwards in Jesus College at Cambridge; and he celebrates the retired content which he enjoyed at Allesborough in Worcestershire, in the house of Thomas, Lord Coventry, where John Gibbon was employed as a domestic tutor, the same office which Mr. Hobbes exercised in the Devonshire family. But the spirit of my kinsman soon emerged into more active life: he visited foreign countries as a soldier and a traveller, acquired the knowledge of the French and Spanish languages, passed some time in the Isle of Jersey, crossed the Atlantic, and resided upwards of a twelvemonth (1659) in the rising colony of Virginia. In this remote province, his taste, or rather passion, for heraldry found a singular gratification at a war-dance of the native Indians. As they moved in measured steps, brandishing their tomahawks, his curious eye contemplated their little shields of bark, and their naked bodies, which were painted with the colours and symbols of his favourite science. "At which I exceedingly wondered; and concluded that heraldry was engrafted naturally into the sense of human race. If so, it deserves a greater esteem than nowadays is put upon it." His return to England after the Restoration was soon followed by his marriage—his settlement in a house in St. Catherine's Cloister, near the Tower, which devolved to my grandfather—and his introduction into the Heralds' College (in 1671) by the style and title of Blue-mantle Pursuivant at Arms. In this office he enjoyed near fifty years the rare felicity of uniting, in the same pursuit, his duty and inclination: his name is remembered in the College, and many of his letters are still preserved. Several of the most respectable characters of the age, Sir William Dugdale, Mr. Ashmole, Dr. John Betts, and Dr. Nehemiah Grew, were his friends; and in the society of such men, John Gibbon may be recorded

without disgrace as the member of an astrological club. The study of hereditary honours is favourable to the royal prerogative; and my kinsman, like most of his family, was a high Tory both in Church and State. In the latter end of the reign of Charles the Second, his pen was exercised in the cause of the Duke of York: the Republican faction he most cordially detested; and as each animal is conscious of its proper arms, the heralds' revenge was emblazoned on a most diabolical escutcheon. But the triumph of the Whig government checked the preferment of Blue-mantle; and he was even suspended from his office, till his tongue could learn to pronounce the oath of abjuration. His life was prolonged to the age of ninety; and, in the expectation of the inevitable though uncertain hour, he wishes to preserve the blessings of health, competence, and virtue. In the year 1682 he published at London his "Introductio ad Latinam Blasoniam," an original attempt, which Camden had desiderated, to define, in a Roman idiom, the terms and attributes of a Gothic institution. It is not two years since I acquired, in a foreign land, some domestic intelligence of my own family; and this intelligence was conveyed to Switzerland from the heart of Germany. I had formed an acquaintance with Mr. Langer, a lively and ingenious scholar, while he resided at Lausanne as preceptor to the Hereditary Prince of Brunswick. On his return to his proper station of librarian to the Ducal Library of Wolfenbuttel, he accidentally found among some literary rubbish a small old English volume of heraldry, inscribed with the name of John Gibbon. From the title only Mr. Langer judged that it might be an acceptable present to his friend; and he judged rightly. His manner is quaint and affected; his order is confused: but he displays some wit, more reading, and still more enthusiasm; and if an enthusiast be often absurd, he is never languid. An English text is perpetually interspersed with Latin sentences in prose and verse; but in his own poetry he claims an exemption from the laws of prosody. Amidst a profusion of genealogical knowledge, my kinsman could not be forgetful of his own name; and to him I am indebted for almost the whole of my information concerning the Gibbon family. From

this small work (a duodecimo of 165 pages) the author expected immortal fame; and at the conclusion of his labour he sings, in a strain of self-exultation—

"Usque huc corrigitur Romana Blasonia per me;
Verborumque dehinc barbara forma cadat.
Hic liber, in meritum si forsitan incidet usum,
Testis rite meæ sedulitatis erit.
Quicquid agat Zoilus, ventura fatebitur ætas
Artis quôd fueram non Clypearis inops."

Such are the hopes of authors! In the failure of those hopes John Gibbon has not been the first of his profession, and very possibly may not be the last of his name. His brother, Matthew Gibbon, the draper, had one daughter and two sons—my grandfather Edward, who was born in the year 1666, and Thomas, afterwards Dean of Carlisle. According to the mercantile creed, that the best book is a profitable ledger, the writings of John the Herald would be much less precious than those of his nephew Edward; but an author professes at least to write for the public benefit, and the slow balance of trade can be pleasing to those persons only to whom it is advantageous. The successful industry of my grandfather raised him above the level of his immediate ancestors. He appears to have launched into various and extensive dealings; even his opinions were subordinate to his interest; and I find him in Flanders clothing King William's troops, while he would have contracted with more pleasure, though not perhaps at a cheaper rate, for the service of King James. During his residence abroad, his concerns at home were managed by his mother, Hester, an active and notable woman. Her second husband was a widower of the name of Acton. They united the children of their first nuptials. After his marriage with the daughter of Richard Acton, goldsmith in Leadenhall Street, he gave his own sister to Sir Whitmore Acton of Aldenham; and I am thus connected, by a triple alliance, with that ancient and loyal family of Shropshire baronets. It consisted about that time of seven brothers, all of gigantic stature—one of whom, a pigmy of six feet two inches, confessed himself the last and least of the seven,

adding, in the true spirit of party, that such men were not born since the Revolution. Under the Tory administration of the four last years of Queen Anne (1710–1714) Mr. Edward Gibbon was appointed one of the Commissioners of the Customs. He sat at that board with Prior, but the merchant was better qualified for his station than the poet, since Lord Bolingbroke has been heard to declare that he had never conversed with a man who more clearly understood the commerce and finances of England. In the year 1716 he was elected one of the directors of the South Sea Company, and his books exhibited the proof that, before his acceptance of this fatal office, he had acquired an independent fortune of £60,000.

But his fortune was overwhelmed in the shipwreck of the year 1720, and the labours of thirty years were blasted in a single day. Of the use or abuse of the South Sea scheme, of the guilt or innocence of my grandfather and his brother directors, I am neither a competent nor a disinterested judge. Yet the equity of modern times must condemn the violent and arbitrary proceedings, which would have disgraced the cause of justice, and would render injustice still more odious. No sooner had the nation awakened from its golden dream than a popular and even a parliamentary clamour demanded their victims; but it was acknowledged on all sides that the South Sea directors, however guilty, could not be touched by any known laws of the land. The speech of Lord Molesworth, the author of the "State of Denmark," may show the temper, or rather the intemperance, of the House of Commons. "Extraordinary crimes," exclaimed that ardent Whig, "call aloud for extraordinary remedies. The Roman lawgivers had not foreseen the possible existence of a parricide, but as soon as the first monster appeared, he was sown in a sack and cast headlong into the river; and I shall be content to inflict the same treatment on the authors of our present ruin." His motion was not literally adopted, but a bill of pains and penalties was introduced, a retroactive statute, to punish the offences, which did not exist at the time they were committed. Such a pernicious violation of liberty and law can be excused only by the most imperious neces-

sity; nor could it be defended on this occasion by the plea of impending danger or useful example. The legislature restrained the persons of the directors, imposed an exorbitant security for their appearance, and marked their characters with a previous note of ignominy. They were compelled to deliver upon oath the strict value of their estates, and were disabled from making any transfer or alienation of any part of their property. Against a bill of pains and penalties it is the common right of every subject to be heard by his counsel at the bar. They prayed to be heard; their prayer was refused; and their oppressors, who required no evidence, would listen to no defence. It had been at first proposed that one-eighth of their respective estates should be allowed for the future support of the directors; but it was speciously urged that in the various shades of opulence and guilt such an unequal proportion would be too light for many, and for some might possibly be too heavy. The character and conduct of each man were separately weighed; but instead of the calm solemnity of a judicial inquiry, the fortune and honour of three and thirty Englishmen were made the topic of hasty conversation, the sport of a lawless majority; and the basest member of the committee, by a malicious word or a silent vote, might indulge his general spleen or personal animosity. Injury was aggravated by insult, and insult was embittered by pleasantry. Allowances of twenty pounds, or one shilling, were facetiously moved. A vague report that a director had formerly been concerned in another project, by which some unknown persons had lost their money, was admitted as a proof of his actual guilt. One man was ruined because he had dropped a foolish speech that his horses should feed upon gold; another because he was grown so proud that one day at the Treasury he had refused a civil answer to persons much above him. All were condemned, absent and unheard, in arbitrary fines and forfeitures, which swept away the greatest part of their substance. Such bold oppression can scarcely be shielded by the omnipotence of parliament, and yet it may be seriously questioned whether the judges of the South Sea directors were the true and legal representatives of their country. The first

parliament of George the First had been chosen (1715) for three years: the term had elapsed, their trust was expired, and the four additional years (1718–1722) during which they continued to sit were derived not from the people, but from themselves; from the strong measures of the Septennial Bill, which can only be paralleled by *il serar di consiglio* of the Venetian history. Yet candour will own that to the same parliament every Englishman is deeply indebted. The Septennial Act, so vicious in its origin, has been sanctioned by time, experience, and the national consent. Its first operation secured the House of Hanover on the throne, and its permanent influence maintains the peace and stability of government. As often as a repeal has been moved in the House of Commons, I have given in its defence a clear and conscientious vote.

My grandfather could not expect to be treated with more lenity than his companions. His Tory principles and connections rendered him obnoxious to the ruling powers; his name is reported in a suspicious secret; and his well-known abilities could not plead the excuse of ignorance or error. In the first proceedings against the South Sea directors, Mr. Gibbon is one of the few who were taken into custody; and, in the final sentence, the measure of his fine proclaims him eminently guilty. The total estimate which he delivered on oath to the House of Commons amounted to £106,543, 5s. 6d., exclusive of antecedent settlements. Two different allowances of £15,000 and of £10,000 were moved for Mr. Gibbon; but, on the question being put, it was carried without a division for the smaller sum. On these ruins, with the skill and credit of which parliament had not been able to despoil him, my grandfather at a mature age erected the edifice of a new fortune: the labours of sixteen years were amply rewarded; and I have reason to believe that the second structure was not much inferior to the first. He had realised a very considerable property in Sussex, Hampshire, Buckinghamshire, and the New River Company; and had acquired a spacious house,[1] with gardens and lands, at Putney, in Surrey, where he resided in decent hospitality. He died in

[1] Since inhabited by Mr. Wood, Sir John Shelley, the Duke of Norfolk, &c.—S.

December 1736, at the age of seventy; and by his last will, at the expense of Edward, his only son (with whose marriage he was not perfectly reconciled), enriched his two daughters, Catherine and Hester. The former became the wife of Mr. Edward Elliston, an East India captain; their daughter and heiress, Catherine, was married in the year 1756 to Edward Eliot, Esq. (now Lord Eliot), of Port Eliot, in the county of Cornwall; and their three sons are my nearest male relations on the father's side. A life of devotion and celibacy was the choice of my aunt, Mrs. Hester Gibbon, who, at the age of eighty-five, still resides in a hermitage at Cliffe, in Northamptonshire, having long survived her spiritual guide and faithful companion, Mr. William Law, who, at an advanced age, about the year 1761, died in her house. In our family he had left the reputation of a worthy and pious man, who believed all that he professed, and practised all that he enjoined. The character of a nonjuror, which he maintained to the last, is a sufficient evidence of his principles in Church and State; and the sacrifice of interest to conscience will be always respectable. His theological writings, which our domestic connection has tempted me to peruse, preserve an imperfect sort of life, and I can pronounce with more confidence and knowledge on the merits of the author. His last compositions are darkly tinctured by the incomprehensible visions of Jacob Behmen; and his discourse on the absolute unlawfulness of stage entertainments is sometimes quoted for a ridiculous intemperance of sentiment and language—"The actors and spectators must all be damned: the playhouse is the porch of hell, the place of the devil's abode, where he holds his filthy court of evil spirits: a play is the devil's triumph, a sacrifice performed to his glory, as much as in the heathen temples of Bacchus or Venus," &c. &c. But these sallies of religious frenzy must not extinguish the praise which is due to Mr. William Law as a wit and a scholar. His argument on topics of less absurdity is specious and acute, his manner is lively, his style forcible and clear; and had not his vigorous mind been clouded by enthusiasm, he might be ranked with the most agreeable and ingenious writers of the times. While the

Bangorian controversy was a fashionable theme, he entered the lists on the subject of Christ's kingdom, and the authority of the priesthood; against the plain account of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper he resumed the combat with Bishop Hoadley, the object of Whig idolatry and Tory abhorrence; and at every weapon of attack and defence the nonjuror, on the ground which is common to both, approves himself at least equal to the prelate. On the appearance of the "Fable of the Bees," he drew his pen against the licentious doctrine that private vices are public benefits, and morality as well as religion must join in his applause. Mr. Law's master work, the "Serious Call," is still read as a popular and powerful book of devotion. His precepts are rigid, but they are founded on the gospel; his satire is sharp, but it is drawn from the knowledge of human life; and many of his portraits are not unworthy of the pen of La Bruyere. If he finds a spark of piety in his reader's mind he will soon kindle it to a flame; and a philosopher must allow that he exposes, with equal severity and truth, the strange contradiction between the faith and practice of the Christian world. Under the names of Flavia and Miranda he has admirably described my two aunts—the heathen and the Christian sister.

My father, Edward Gibbon, was born in October 1707; at the age of thirteen he could scarcely feel that he was disinherited by act of parliament; and, as he advanced towards manhood, new prospects of fortune opened to his view. A parent is most attentive to supply in his children the deficiencies of which he is conscious in himself: my grandfather's knowledge was derived from a strong understanding and the experience of the ways of men; but my father enjoyed the benefits of a liberal education as a scholar and a gentleman. At Westminster school, and afterwards at Emanuel College in Cambridge, he passed through a regular course of academical discipline; and the care of his learning and morals was entrusted to his private tutor, the same Mr. William Law. But the mind of a saint is above or below the present world; and while the pupil proceeded on his travels, the tutor remained at Putney, the much-honoured friend and

spiritual director of the whole family. My father resided some time at Paris to acquire the fashionable exercises; and as his temper was warm and social, he indulged in those pleasures, for which the strictness of his former education had given him a keener relish. He afterwards visited several provinces of France, but his excursions were neither long nor remote; and the slender knowledge which he had gained of the French language was gradually obliterated. His passage through Besançon is marked by a singular consequence in the chain of human events. In a dangerous illness Mr. Gibbon was attended, at his own request, by one of his kinsmen of the name of Acton, the younger brother of a younger brother, who had applied himself to the study of physic. During the slow recovery of his patient, the physician himself was attacked by the malady of love: he married his mistress, renounced his country and religion, settled at Besançon, and became the father of three sons, the eldest of whom, General Acton, is conspicuous in Europe as the principal minister of the King of the Two Sicilies. By an uncle whom another stroke of fortune had transplanted to Leghorn, he was educated in the naval service of the emperor; and his valour and conduct in the command of the Tuscan frigates protected the retreat of the Spaniards from Algiers. On my father's return to England he was chosen, in the general election of 1734, to serve in parliament for the borough of Petersfield; a burgage tenure, of which my grandfather possessed a weighty share, till he alienated (I know not why) such important property. In the opposition to Sir Robert Walpole and the Pelhams, prejudice and society connected his son with the Tories—shall I say Jacobites? or, as they were pleased to style themselves, the country gentlemen? With them he gave many a vote; with them he drank many a bottle. Without acquiring the fame of an orator or a statesman, he eagerly joined in the great opposition, which, after a seven years' chase, hunted down Sir Robert Walpole; and in the pursuit of an unpopular minister, he gratified a private revenge against the oppressor of his family in the South Sea persecution.

I was born at Putney, in the county of Surrey, the 27th of April (O.S.), in the year 1737; the first child of the marriage of Edward Gibbon, Esq., and of Judith Porten.[1] My lot might have been that of a slave, a savage, or a peasant; nor can I reflect without pleasure on the bounty of Nature, which cast my birth in a free and civilised country, in an age of science and philosophy, in a family of honourable rank, and decently endowed with the gifts of fortune. From my birth I have enjoyed the right of primogeniture; but I was succeeded by five brothers and one sister, all of whom were snatched away in their infancy. My five brothers, whose names may be found in the parish register of Putney, I shall not pretend to lament; but from my childhood to the present hour I have deeply and sincerely regretted my sister, whose life was somewhat prolonged, and whom I remember to have seen an amiable infant. The relation of a brother and a sister, especially if they do not marry, appears to me of a very singular nature. It is a familiar and tender friendship with a female, much about our own age; an affection perhaps softened by the secret influence of sex, but pure from any mixture of sensual desire, the sole species of Platonic love that can be indulged with truth and without danger.

At the general election of 1741, Mr. Gibbon and Mr. Delmé stood an expensive and successful contest at Southampton, against Mr. Dummer and Mr. Henley, afterwards Lord Chancellor and Earl of Northington. The Whig candidates had a majority of the resident voters, but the corporation was firm in the Tory interest: a sudden creation of 170 new freemen turned the scale, and a supply was readily obtained of respectable volunteers, who flocked from all parts of England to support the cause of their

[1] The union to which I owe my birth was a marriage of inclination and esteem. Mr. James Porten, a merchant of London, resided with his family at Putney, in a house adjoining to the bridge and churchyard, where I have passed many happy hours of my childhood. He left one son (the late Sir Stanier Porten) and three daughters: Catherine, who preserved her maiden name, and of whom I shall hereafter speak; another daughter married Mr. Darrel, of Richmond, and left two sons, Edward and Robert; the youngest of the three sisters was Judith, my mother.

political friends. The new parliament opened with the victory of an opposition, which was fortified by strong clamour and strange coalitions. From the event of the first divisions, Sir Robert Walpole perceived that he could no longer lead a majority in the House of Commons, and prudently resigned (after a dominion of one and twenty years) the guidance of the State (1742). But the fall of an unpopular minister was not succeeded, according to general expectation, by a millennium of happiness and virtue: some courtiers lost their places, some patriots lost their characters, Lord Orford's offences vanished with his power; and after a short vibration, the Pelham government was fixed on the old basis of the Whig aristocracy. In the year 1745, the throne and the constitution were attacked by a rebellion, which does not reflect much honour on the national spirit: since the English friends of the Pretender wanted courage to join his standard, and his enemies (the bulk of the people) allowed him to advance into the heart of the kingdom. Without daring, perhaps without desiring, to aid the rebels, my father invariably adhered to the Tory opposition. In the most critical season he accepted, for the service of the party, the office of alderman in the City of London; but the duties were so repugnant to his inclination and habits that he resigned his gown at the end of a few months. The second parliament in which he sat was prematurely dissolved (1747); and as he was unable or unwilling to maintain a second contest for Southampton, the life of the senator expired in that dissolution.

The death of a new-born child before that of its parents may seem an unnatural, but it is strictly a probable, event: since of any given number the greater part are extinguished before their ninth year, before they possess the faculties of the mind or body. Without accusing the profuse waste or imperfect workmanship of Nature, I shall only observe that this unfavourable chance was multiplied against my infant existence. So feeble was my constitution, so precarious my life, that, in the baptism of each of my brothers, my father's prudence successively repeated my Christian name of Edward, that, in case of the departure of the eldest

son, this patronymic appellation might be still perpetuated in the family.

"Uno avulso non deficit alter."

To preserve and to rear so frail a being, the most tender assiduity was scarcely sufficient; and my mother's attention was somewhat diverted by her frequent pregnancies, by an exclusive passion for her husband, and by the dissipation of the world, in which his taste and authority obliged her to mingle. But the maternal office was supplied by my aunt, Mrs. Catherine Porten, at whose name I feel a tear of gratitude trickling down my cheek. A life of celibacy transferred her vacant affection to her sister's first child: my weakness excited her pity; her attachment was fortified by labour and success; and if there be any, as I trust there are some, who rejoice that I live, to that dear and excellent woman they must hold themselves indebted. Many anxious and solitary days did she consume in the patient trial of every mode of relief and amusement. Many wakeful nights did she sit by my bedside in trembling expectation that each hour would be my last. Of the various and frequent disorders of my childhood my own recollection is dark; nor do I wish to expatiate on so disgusting a topic. Suffice it to say, that while every practitioner, from Sloane and Ward to the Chevalier Taylor, was successively summoned to torture or relieve me, the care of my mind was too frequently neglected for that of my health: compassion always suggested an excuse for the indulgence of the master, or the idleness of the pupil; and the chain of my education was broken as often as I was recalled from the school of learning to the bed of sickness.

As soon as the use of speech had prepared my infant reason for the admission of knowledge, I was taught the arts of reading, writing, and arithmetic. So remote is the date, so vague is the memory of their origin in myself, that, were not the error corrected by analogy, I should be tempted to conceive them as innate. In my childhood I was praised for the readiness with which I could multiply and divide, by memory alone, two sums of several figures: such praise encouraged my growing talent; and had I persevered

in this line of application, I might have acquired some fame in mathematical studies.

After this previous institution at home, or at a day-school at Putney, I was delivered at the age of seven into the hands of Mr. John Kirkby, who exercised about eighteen months the office of my domestic tutor. His own words, which I shall here transcribe, inspire in his favour a sentiment of pity and esteem. "During my abode in my native county of Cumberland, in quality of an indigent curate, I used now and then in a summer, when the pleasantness of the season invited, to take a solitary walk to the seashore, which lies about two miles from the town where I lived. Here I would amuse myself, one while in viewing at large the agreeable prospect which surrounded me, and another while (confining my sight to nearer objects) in admiring the vast variety of beautiful shells thrown upon the beach, some of the choicest of which I always picked up to divert my little ones upon my return. One time among the rest, taking such a journey in my head, I sat down upon the declivity of the beach with my face to the sea, which was now come up within a few yards of my feet; when immediately the sad thoughts of the wretched condition of my family, and the unsuccessfulness of all endeavours to amend it, came crowding into my mind, which drove me into a deep melancholy, and ever and anon forced tears from my eyes." Distress at last forced him to leave the country. His learning and virtue introduced him to my father; and at Putney he might have found at least a temporary shelter, had not an act of indiscretion again driven him into the world. One day reading prayers in the parish church, he most unluckily forgot the name of King George: his patron, a loyal subject, dismissed him with some reluctance, and a decent reward; and how the poor man ended his days I have never been able to learn. Mr. John Kirkby is the author of two small volumes—the "Life of Automathes" (London, 1745), and an "English and Latin Grammar" (London, 1746), which, as a testimony of gratitude, he dedicated (November 5th, 1745) to my father. The books are before me: from them the pupil may judge the preceptor; and, upon the whole, his

judgment will not be unfavourable. The grammar is executed with accuracy and skill, and I know not whether any better existed at the time in our language; but the "Life of Automathes" aspires to the honours of a philosophical fiction. It is the story of a youth, the son of a shipwrecked exile, who lives alone on a desert island from infancy to the age of manhood. A hind is his nurse; he inherits a cottage, with many useful and curious instruments; some ideas remain of the education of his two first years; some arts are borrowed from the beavers of a neighbouring lake; some truths are revealed in supernatural visions. With these helps and his own industry Automathes becomes a self-taught though speechless philosopher, who had investigated with success his own mind, the natural world, the abstract sciences, and the great principles of morality and religion. The author is not entitled to the merit of invention, since he has blended the English story of Robinson Crusoe with the Arabian romance of Hai Ebn Yokhdan, which he might have read in the Latin version of Pocock. In the Automathes I cannot praise either the depth of thought or elegance of style, but the book is not devoid of entertainment or instruction; and among several interesting passages I would select the discovery of fire, which produces by accidental mischief the discovery of conscience. A man who had thought so much on the subjects of language and education was surely no ordinary preceptor: my childish years and his hasty departure prevented me from enjoying the full benefit of his lessons; but they enlarged my knowledge of arithmetic, and left me a clear impression of the English and Latin rudiments.

In my ninth year (January 1746), in a lucid interval of comparative health, my father adopted the convenient and customary mode of English education; and I was sent to Kingston-upon-Thames, to a school of about seventy boys, which was kept by Dr. Wooddeson and his assistants. Every time I have since passed over Putney Common, I have always noticed the spot where my mother, as we drove along in the coach, admonished me that I was now going into the world, and must learn to think and act for myself. The expression may appear ludicrous; yet

there is not, in the course of life, a more remarkable change than the removal of a child from the luxury and freedom of a wealthy house to the frugal diet and strict subordination of a school; from the tenderness of parents, and the obsequiousness of servants, to the rude familiarity of his equals, the insolent tyranny of his seniors, and the rod, perhaps, of a cruel and capricious pedagogue. Such hardships may steel the mind and body against the injuries of fortune; but my timid reserve was astonished by the crowd and tumult of the school; the want of strength and activity disqualified me for the sports of the play-field; nor have I forgotten how often in the year 1746 I was reviled and buffeted for the sins of my Tory ancestors. By the common methods of discipline, at the expense of many tears and some blood, I purchased the knowledge of the Latin syntax; and not long since I was possessed of the dirty volumes of Phædrus and Cornelius Nepos, which I painfully construed and darkly understood. The choice of these authors is not injudicious. The lives of Cornelius Nepos, the friend of Atticus and Cicero, are composed in the style of the purest age: his simplicity is elegant, his brevity copious: he exhibits a series of men and manners; and with such illustrations, as every pedant is not indeed qualified to give, this classic biographer may initiate a young student in the history of Greece and Rome. The use of fables or apologues has been approved in every age from ancient India to modern Europe. They convey in familiar images the truths of morality and prudence; and the most childish understanding (I advert to the scruples of Rousseau) will not suppose either that beasts do speak, or that men may lie. A fable represents the genuine characters of animals, and a skilful master might extract from Pliny and Bouffon some pleasing lessons of natural history, a science well adapted to the taste and capacity of children. The Latinity of Phædrus is not exempt from an alloy of the silver age; but his manner is concise, terse, and sententious: the Thracian slave discreetly breathes the spirit of a freeman; and when the text is found, the style is perspicuous. But his fables, after a long oblivion, were first published by Peter Pithou from a corrupt

manuscript. The labours of fifty editors confess the defects of the copy, as well as the value of the original; and the schoolboy may have been whipped for misapprehending a passage which Bentley could not restore, and which Burman could not explain.

My studies were too frequently interrupted by sickness; and after a real or nominal residence at Kingston school of near two years, I was finally recalled (December 1747) by my mother's death, which was occasioned in her thirty-eighth year by the consequences of her last labour. I was too young to feel the importance of my loss, and the image of her person and conversation is faintly imprinted in my memory. The affectionate heart of my aunt, Catherine Porten, bewailed a sister and a friend; but my poor father was inconsolable, and the transport of grief seemed to threaten his life or his reason. I can never forget the scene of our first interview, some weeks after the fatal event; the awful silence, the room hung with black, the midday tapers, his sighs and tears; his praises of my mother, a saint in heaven; his solemn adjuration that I would cherish her memory and imitate her virtues; and the fervour with which he kissed and blessed me as the sole surviving pledge of their loves. The storm of passion insensibly subsided into calmer melancholy. At a convivial meeting of his friends, Mr. Gibbon might affect or enjoy a gleam of cheerfulness, but his plan of happiness was for ever destroyed; and after the loss of his companion he was left alone in a world of which the business and pleasures were to him irksome or insipid. After some unsuccessful trials he renounced the tumult of London and the hospitality of Putney, and buried himself in the rural or rather rustic solitude of Buriton, from which, during several years, he seldom emerged.

As far back as I can remember, the house, near Putney bridge and churchyard, of my maternal grandfather appears in the light of my proper and native home. It was there that I was allowed to spend the greatest part of my time, in sickness or in health, during my school vacations and my parents' residence in London, and finally after my mother's death. Three months after that event, in the spring of 1748, the commercial ruin of her father,

Mr. James Porten, was accomplished and declared. He suddenly absconded; but as his effects were not sold nor the house evacuated till the Christmas following, I enjoyed during the whole year the society of my aunt, without much consciousness of her impending fate. I feel a melancholy pleasure in repeating my obligations to that excellent woman, Mrs. Catherine Porten, the true mother of my mind as well as of my health. Her natural good sense was improved by the perusal of the best books in the English language; and if her reason was sometimes clouded by prejudice, her sentiments were never disguised by hypocrisy or affectation. Her indulgent tenderness, the frankness of her temper, and my innate rising curiosity, soon removed all distance between us. Like friends of an equal age, we freely conversed on every topic, familiar or abstruse; and it was her delight and reward to observe the first shoots of my young ideas. Pain and languor were often soothed by the voice of instruction and amusement; and to her kind lessons I ascribe my early and invincible love of reading, which I would not exchange for the treasures of India. I should perhaps be astonished were it possible to ascertain the date at which a favourite tale was engraved, by frequent repetition, in my memory—the Cavern of the Winds, the Palace of Felicity, and the fatal moment, at the end of three months or centuries, when Prince Adolphus is overtaken by Time, who had worn out so many pair of wings in the pursuit. Before I left Kingston school I was well acquainted with Pope's Homer and the Arabian Nights' Entertainments, two books which will always please by the moving picture of human manners and specious miracles. Nor was I then capable of discerning that Pope's translation is a portrait endowed with every merit excepting that of likeness to the original. The verses of Pope accustomed my ear to the sound of poetic harmony. In the death of Hector and the shipwreck of Ulysses I tasted the new emotions of terror and pity, and seriously disputed with my aunt on the vices and virtues of the heroes of the Trojan war. From Pope's Homer to Dryden's Virgil was an easy transition; but I know not how, from some fault in the author, the translator, or the reader, the pious Æneas did not so forcibly

seize on my imagination; and I derived more pleasure from Ovid's Metamorphoses, especially in the fall of Phaëton and the speeches of Ajax and Ulysses. My grandfather's flight unlocked the door of a tolerable library, and I turned over many English pages of poetry and romance, of history and travels. Where a title attracted my eye, without fear or awe I snatched the volume from the shelf; and Mrs. Porten, who indulged herself in moral and religious speculations, was more prone to encourage than to check a curiosity above the strength of a boy. This year (1748), the twelfth of my age, I shall note as the most propitious to the growth of my intellectual stature.

The relics of my grandfather's fortune afforded a bare annuity for his own maintenance; and his daughter, my worthy aunt, who had already passed her fortieth year, was left destitute. Her noble spirit scorned a life of obligation and dependence; and after revolving several schemes, she preferred the humble industry of keeping a boarding-house for Westminster school,[1] where she laboriously earned a competence for her old age. This singular opportunity of blending the advantages of private and public education decided my father. After the Christmas holidays, in January 1749, I accompanied Mrs. Porten to her new house in College Street, and was immediately entered in the school, of which Dr. John Nicoll was at that time headmaster. At first I was alone; but my aunt's resolution was praised, her character was esteemed, her friends were numerous and active. In the course of some years she became the mother of forty or fifty boys, for the most part of family and fortune; and as her primitive habitation was too narrow, she built and occupied a spacious mansion in Dean's Yard. I shall always be ready to join in the common opinion that our public schools, which have produced so many eminent characters, are the best adapted to the genius and constitution of the English people. A boy of spirit may acquire a previous and practical experience of the world; and his play-

[1] It is said in the family that she was principally induced to this undertaking by her affection for her nephew, whose weak constitution required her constant and unremitted attention.—S.

fellows may be the future friends of his heart or his interest. In a free intercourse with his equals, the habits of truth, fortitude, and prudence will insensibly be matured. Birth and riches are measured by the standard of personal merit; and the mimic scene of a rebellion has displayed in their true colours the ministers and patriots of the rising generation. Our seminaries of learning do not exactly correspond with the precept of a Spartan king, "that the child should be instructed in the arts which will be useful to the man," since a finished scholar may emerge from the head of Westminster or Eton in total ignorance of the business and conversation of English gentlemen in the latter end of the eighteenth century. But these schools may assume the merit of teaching all that they pretend to teach, the Latin and Greek languages. They deposit in the hands of a disciple the keys of two valuable chests; nor can he complain if they are afterwards lost or neglected by his own fault. The necessity of leading in equal ranks so many unequal powers of capacity and application will prolong to eight or ten years the juvenile studies which might be despatched in half that time by the skilful master of a single pupil. Yet even the repetition of exercise and discipline contributes to fix in a vacant mind the verbal science of grammar and prosody; and the private or voluntary student, who possesses the sense and spirit of the classics, may offend by a false quantity the scrupulous ear of a well-flogged critic. For myself, I must be content with a very small share of the civil and literary fruits of a public school. In the space of two years (1749, 1750), interrupted by danger and debility, I painfully climbed into the third form; and my riper age was left to acquire the beauties of the Latin and the rudiments of the Greek tongue. Instead of audaciously mingling in the sports, the quarrels, and the connections of our little world, I was still cherished at home under the maternal wing of my aunt; and my removal from Westminster long preceded the approach of manhood.

The violence and variety of my complaints, which had excused my frequent absence from Westminster school, at length engaged Mrs. Porten, with the advice of physicians, to conduct me to Bath. At the end of the Michaelmas vacation (1750) she quitted

me with reluctance, and I remained several months under the care of a trusty maid-servant. A strange nervous affection, which alternately contracted my legs, and produced, without any visible symptoms, the most excruciating pain, was ineffectually opposed by the various methods of bathing and pumping. From Bath I was transported to Winchester, to the house of a physician; and after the failure of his medical skill we had again recourse to the virtues of the Bath waters. During the intervals of these fits I moved with my father to Buriton and Putney, and a short unsuccessful trial was attempted to renew my attendance at Westminster school. But my infirmities could not be reconciled with the hours and discipline of a public seminary; and instead of a domestic tutor, who might have watched the favourable moments, and gently advanced the progress of my learning, my father was too easily content with such occasional teachers as the different places of my residence could supply. I was never forced, and seldom was I persuaded, to admit these lessons; yet I read with a clergyman at Bath some odes of Horace and several episodes of Virgil, which gave me an imperfect and transient enjoyment of the Latin poets. It might now be apprehended that I should continue for life an illiterate cripple; but as I approached my sixteenth year, Nature displayed in my favour her mysterious energies. My constitution was fortified and fixed, and my disorders, instead of growing with my growth and strengthening with my strength, most wonderfully vanished. I have never possessed or abused the insolence of health, but since that time few persons have been more exempt from real or imaginary ills; and till I am admonished by the gout, the reader will no more be troubled with the history of my bodily complaints. My unexpected recovery again encouraged the hope of my education, and I was placed at Esher, in Surrey, in the house of the Reverend Mr. Philip Francis, in a pleasant spot, which promised to unite the various benefits of air, exercise, and study (January 1752). The translator of Horace might have taught me to relish the Latin poets, had not my friends discovered in a few weeks that he preferred the pleasures of London to the instruction of his pupils.

My father's perplexity at this time, rather than his prudence, was urged to embrace a singular and desperate measure. Without preparation or delay he carried me to Oxford, and I was matriculated in the university as a gentleman commoner of Magdalen College before I had accomplished the fifteenth year of my age (April 3, 1752).

The curiosity which had been implanted in my infant mind was still alive and active, but my reason was not sufficiently informed to understand the value, or to lament the loss, of three precious years from my entrance at Westminster to my admission at Oxford. Instead of repining at my long and frequent confinement to the chamber or the couch, I secretly rejoiced in those infirmities which delivered me from the exercises of the school and the society of my equals. As often as I was tolerably exempt from danger and pain, reading, free desultory reading, was the employment and comfort of my solitary hours. At Westminster, my aunt sought only to amuse and indulge me; in my stations at Bath and Winchester, at Buriton and Putney, a false compassion respected my sufferings; and I was allowed, without control or advice, to gratify the wanderings of an unripe taste. My indiscriminate appetite subsided by degrees in the historic line, and since philosophy has exploded all innate ideas and natural propensities, I must ascribe this choice to the assiduous perusal of the "Universal History," as the octavo volumes successively appeared. This unequal work, and a treatise of Herne, the "Ductor Historicus," referred and introduced me to the Greek and Roman historians, to as many at least as were accessible to an English reader. All that I could find were greedily devoured, from Littlebury's lame "Herodotus," and Spelman's valuable "Xenophon," to the pompous folios of Gordon's "Tacitus," and a ragged "Procopius" of the beginning of the last century. The cheap acquisition of so much knowledge confirmed my dislike to the study of languages, and I argued with Mrs. Porten that, were I master of Greek and Latin, I must interpret to myself in English the thoughts of the original, and that such extemporary versions must be inferior to the elaborate translations of professed scholars

—a silly sophism which could not easily be confuted by a person ignorant of any other language than her own. From the ancient I leaped to the modern world: many crude lumps of Speed, Rapin, Mezeray, Davila, Machiavel, Father Paul, Bower, &c., I devoured like so many novels; and I swallowed with the same voracious appetite the descriptions of India and China, of Mexico and Peru.

My first introduction to the historic scenes, which have since engaged so many years of my life, must be ascribed to an accident. In the summer of 1751, I accompanied my father on a visit to Mr. Hoare's, in Wiltshire; but I was less delighted with the beauties of Stourhead than with discovering in the library a common book, the "Continuation of Echard's Roman History," which is indeed executed with more skill and taste than the previous work. To me the reigns of the successors of Constantine were absolutely new; and I was immersed in the passage of the Goths over the Danube, when the summons of the dinner-bell reluctantly dragged me from my intellectual feast. This transient glance served rather to irritate than to appease my curiosity; and as soon as I returned to Bath I procured the second and third volumes of Howell's "History of the World," which exhibit the Byzantine period on a larger scale. Mahomet and his Saracens soon fixed my attention, and some instinct of criticism directed me to the genuine sources. Simon Ockley, an original in every sense, first opened my eyes; and I was led from one book to another, till I had ranged round the circle of Oriental history. Before I was sixteen I had exhausted all that could be learned in English of the Arabs and Persians, the Tartars and Turks; and the same ardour urged me to guess at the French of D'Herbelot, and to construe the barbarous Latin of Pococke's "Abulfarajius." Such vague and multifarious reading could not teach me to think, to write, or to act, and the only principle that darted a ray of light into the indigested chaos was an early and rational application to the order of time and place. The maps of Cellarius and Wells imprinted in my mind the picture of ancient geography; from Stranchius I imbibed the elements of chronology; the Tables of Helvicus and Anderson, the Annals of Usher and

Prideaux, distinguished the connection of events, and engraved the multitude of names and dates in a clear and indelible series. But in the discussion of the first ages I overleaped the bounds of modesty and use. In my childish balance I presumed to weigh the systems of Scaliger and Petavius, of Marsham and Newton, which I could seldom study in the originals; and my sleep has been disturbed by the difficulty of reconciling the Septuagint with the Hebrew computation. I arrived at Oxford with a stock of erudition that might have puzzled a doctor, and a degree of ignorance of which a school-boy would have been ashamed.

At the conclusion of this first period of my life, I attempted to enter a protest against the trite and lavish praise of the happiness of our boyish years, which is echoed with so much affectation in the world. That happiness I have never known, that time I have never regretted; and were my poor aunt still alive, she would bear testimony to the early and constant uniformity of my sentiments. It will indeed be replied that I am not a competent judge—that pleasure is incompatible with pain, that joy is excluded from sickness, and that the felicity of a school-boy consists in the perpetual motion of thoughtless and playful agility, in which I was never qualified to excel. My name, it is most true, could never be enrolled among the sprightly race, the idle progeny of Eton or Westminster—

> "Who foremost may delight to cleave,
> With pliant arm, the glassy wave,
> Or urge the flying ball."

The poet may gaily describe the short hours of recreation, but he forgets the daily tedious labours of the school, which is approached each morning with anxious and reluctant steps.

A traveller who visits Oxford or Cambridge is surprised and edified by the apparent order and tranquillity that prevail in the seats of the English Muses. In the most celebrated universities of Holland, Germany, and Italy, the students, who swarm from different countries, are loosely dispersed in private lodgings at the houses of the burghers. They dress according to their fancy and

fortune; and in the intemperate quarrels of youth and wine, their swords, though less frequently than of old, are sometimes stained with each other's blood. The use of arms is banished from our English universities; the uniform habit of the academics, the square cap and black gown, is adapted to the civil and even clerical profession; and from the doctor in divinity to the undergraduate, the degrees of learning and age are externally distinguished. Instead of being scattered in a town, the students of Oxford and Cambridge are united in colleges; their maintenance is provided at their own expense, or that of the founders; and the stated hours of the hall and chapel represent the discipline of a regular and, as it were, a religious community. The eyes of the traveller are attracted by the size or beauty of the public edifices, and the principal colleges appear to be so many palaces which a liberal nation has erected and endowed for the habitation of science. My own introduction to the University of Oxford forms a new era in my life, and at the distance of forty years I still remember my first emotions of surprise and satisfaction. In my fifteenth year I felt myself suddenly raised from a boy to a man: the persons whom I respected as my superiors in age and academical rank entertained me with every mark of attention and civility; and my vanity was flattered by the velvet cap and silk gown which distinguish a gentleman commoner from a plebeian student. A decent allowance, more money than a school-boy had ever seen, was at my own disposal; and I might command among the tradesmen of Oxford an indefinite and dangerous latitude of credit. A key was delivered into my hands which gave me the free use of a numerous and learned library. My apartment consisted of three elegant and well-furnished rooms in the new building, a stately pile, of Magdalen College; and the adjacent walks, had they been frequented by Plato's disciples, might have been compared to the Attic shade on the banks of the Ilissus. Such was the fair prospect of my entrance (April 3, 1752) into the University of Oxford.

A venerable prelate, whose taste and erudition must reflect honour on the society in which they were formed, has drawn a

very interesting picture of his academical life. "I was educated," says Bishop Lowth, "in the University of Oxford. I enjoyed all the advantages, both public and private, which that famous seat of learning so largely affords. I spent many years in that illustrious society, in a well-regulated course of useful discipline and studies, and in the agreeable and improving commerce of gentlemen and of scholars; in a society where emulation without envy, ambition without jealousy, contention without animosity, incited industry and awakened genius; where a liberal pursuit of knowledge and a genuine freedom of thought was raised, encouraged, and pushed forward by example, by commendation, and by authority. I breathed the same atmosphere that the Hookers, the Chillingworths, and the Lockes had breathed before; whose benevolence and humanity were as extensive as their vast genius and comprehensive knowledge; who always treated their adversaries with civility and respect; who made candour, moderation, and liberal judgment as much the rule and law as the subject of their discourse. And do you reproach me with my education in this place, and with my relation to this most respectable body, which I shall always esteem my greatest advantage and my highest honour?" I transcribe with pleasure this eloquent passage, without examining what benefits or what rewards were derived by Hooker, or Chillingworth, or Locke, from their academical institution; without inquiring whether in this angry controversy the spirit of Lowth himself is purified from the intolerant zeal which Warburton had ascribed to the genius of the place. It may indeed be observed that the atmosphere of Oxford did not agree with Mr. Locke's constitution, and that the philosopher justly despised the academical bigots who expelled his person and condemned his principles. The expression of gratitude is a virtue and a pleasure: a liberal mind will delight to cherish and celebrate the memory of its parents; and the teachers of science are the parents of the mind. I applaud the filial piety, which it is impossible for me to imitate, since I must not confess an imaginary debt to assume the merit of a just or generous retribution. To the University of Oxford I acknow-

ledge no obligation; and she will as cheerfully renounce me for a son as I am willing to disclaim her for a mother. I spent fourteen months at Magdalen College; they proved the fourteen months the most idle and unprofitable of my whole life; the reader will pronounce between the school and the scholar; but I cannot affect to believe that Nature had disqualified me for all literary pursuits. The specious and ready excuse of my tender age, imperfect preparation, and hasty departure may doubtless be alleged; nor do I wish to defraud such excuses of their proper weight. Yet in my sixteenth year I was not devoid of capacity or application; even my childish reading had displayed an early though blind propensity for books; and the shallow flood might have been taught to flow in a deep channel and a clear stream. In the discipline of a well-constituted academy, under the guidance of skilful and vigilant professors, I should gradually have risen from translations to originals, from the Latin to the Greek classics, from dead languages to living science: my hours would have been occupied by useful and agreeable studies, the wanderings of fancy would have been restrained, and I should have escaped the temptations of idleness which finally precipitated my departure from Oxford.

Perhaps in a separate annotation I may coolly examine the fabulous and real antiquities of our sister universities, a question which has kindled such fierce and foolish disputes among their fanatic sons. In the meanwhile it will be acknowledged that these venerable bodies are sufficiently old to partake of all the prejudices and infirmities of age. The schools of Oxford and Cambridge were founded in a dark age of false and barbarous science; and they are still tainted with the vices of their origin. Their primitive discipline was adapted to the education of priests and monks; and the government still remains in the hands of the clergy, an order of men whose manners are remote from the present world, and whose eyes are dazzled by the light of philosophy. The legal incorporation of these societies by the charters of popes and kings had given them a monopoly of the public instruction; and the spirit of monopolists is narrow, lazy, and

oppressive; their work is more costly and less productive than that of independent artists; and the new improvements so eagerly grasped by the competition of freedom are admitted with slow and sullen reluctance in those proud corporations, above the fear of a rival, and below the confession of an error. We may scarcely hope that any reformation will be a voluntary act; and so deeply are they rooted in law and prejudice, that even the omnipotence of parliament would shrink from an inquiry into the state and abuses of the two universities.

The use of academical degrees, as old as the thirteenth century, is visibly borrowed from the mechanic corporations; in which an apprentice, after serving his time, obtains a testimonial of his skill, and a licence to practise his trade and mystery. It is not my design to depreciate those honours, which could never gratify or disappoint my ambition; and I should applaud the institution, if the decrees of bachelor or licentiate were bestowed as the reward of manly and successful study: if the name and rank of doctor or master were strictly reserved for the professors of science, who have approved their title to the public esteem.

In all the universities of Europe, excepting our own, the languages and sciences are distributed among a numerous list of effective professors: the students, according to their taste, their calling, and their diligence, apply themselves to the proper masters; and in the annual repetition of public and private lectures these masters are assiduously employed. Our curiosity may inquire what number of professors has been instituted at Oxford? (for I shall now confine myself to my own university). By whom are they appointed, and what may be the probable chances of merit or incapacity? How many are stationed to the three faculties, and how many are left for the liberal arts? What is the form, and what the substance, of their lessons? But all these questions are silenced by one short and singular answer, "That in the University of Oxford, the greater part of the public professors have for these many years given up altogether even the pretence of teaching." Incredible as the fact may appear, I must rest my belief on the positive and impartial evidence of a master of moral

and political wisdom, who had himself resided at Oxford. Dr. Adam Smith assigns as the cause of their indolence, that, instead of being paid by voluntary contributions, which would urge them to increase the number, and to deserve the gratitude of their pupils, the Oxford professors are secure in the enjoyment of a fixed stipend, without the necessity of labour or the apprehension of control. It has indeed been observed, nor is the observation absurd, that excepting in experimental sciences, which demand a costly apparatus and a dexterous hand, the many valuable treatises that have been published on every subject of learning may now supersede the ancient mode of oral instruction. Were this principle true in its utmost latitude, I should only infer that the offices and salaries which are become useless ought without delay to be abolished. But there still remains a material difference between a book and a professor; the hour of the lecture enforces attendance; attention is fixed by the presence, the voice, and the occasional questions of the teacher; the most idle will carry something away; and the more diligent will compare the instructions which they have heard in the school with the volumes which they peruse in their chamber. The advice of a skilful professor will adapt a course of reading to every mind and every situation; his authority will discover, admonish, and at last chastise the negligence of his disciples; and his vigilant inquiries will ascertain the steps of their literary progress. Whatever science he professes he may illustrate in a series of discourses, composed in the leisure of his closet, pronounced on public occasions, and finally delivered to the press. I observe with pleasure that in the University of Oxford Dr. Lowth, with equal eloquence and erudition, has executed this task in his incomparable Prælections on the Poetry of the Hebrews.

The College of St. Mary Magdalen was founded in the fifteenth century by Waynflete, Bishop of Winchester; and now consists of a president, forty fellows, and a number of inferior students. It is esteemed one of the largest and most wealthy of our academical corporations, which may be compared to the Benedictine abbeys of Catholic countries; and I have loosely heard that the estates

belonging to Magdalen College, which are leased by those indulgent landlords at small quit-rents and occasional fines, might be raised, in the hands of private avarice, to an annual revenue of nearly £30,000. Our colleges are supposed to be schools of science as well as of education; nor is it unreasonable to expect that a body of literary men, devoted to a life of celibacy, exempt from the care of their own subsistence, and amply provided with books, should devote their leisure to the prosecution of study, and that some effects of their studies should be manifested to the world. The shelves of their library groan under the weight of the Benedictine folios, of the editions of the fathers, and the collections of the Middle Ages, which have issued from the single abbey of St. Germaine de Préz at Paris. A composition of genius must be the offspring of one mind; but such works of industry as may be divided among many hands, and must be continued during many years, are the peculiar province of a laborious community. If I inquire into the manufactures of the monks of Magdalen, if I extend the inquiry to the other colleges of Oxford and Cambridge, a silent blush, or a scornful frown, will be the only reply. The fellows or monks of my time were decent easy men, who supinely enjoyed the gifts of the founder: their days were filled by a series of uniform employments; the chapel and the hall, the coffee-house and the common room, till they retired, weary and well satisfied, to a long slumber. (From the toil of reading, or thinking, or writing, they had absolved their conscience; and the first shoots of learning and ingenuity withered on the ground, without yielding any fruits to the owners or the public.) As a gentleman commoner, I was admitted to the society of the fellows, and fondly expected that some questions of literature would be the amusing and instructive topics of their discourse. Their conversation stagnated in a round of college business, Tory politics, personal anecdotes, and private scandal: their dull and deep potations excused the brisk intemperance of youth; and their constitutional toasts were not expressive of the most lively loyalty for the house of Hanover. A general election was now approaching: the great Oxfordshire contest already blazed with all the malevolence of

party zeal. Magdalen College was devoutly attached to the old interest; and the names of Wenman and Dashwood were more frequently pronounced than those of Cicero and Chrysostom. The example of the senior fellows could not inspire the undergraduates with a liberal spirit or studious emulation; (and I cannot describe, as I never knew, the discipline of college.) Some duties may possibly have been imposed on the poor scholars whose ambition aspired to the peaceful honours of a fellowship (ascribi quietis ordinibus . . . Deorum); but no independent members were admitted below the rank of a gentleman commoner, and our velvet cap was the cap of liberty. A tradition prevailed that some of our predecessors had spoken Latin declamations in the hall; but of this ancient custom no vestige remained: the obvious methods of public exercises and examinations were totally unknown; and I have never heard that either the president or the society interfered in the private economy of the tutors and their pupils.

The silence of the Oxford professors, which deprives the youth of public instruction, is imperfectly supplied by the tutors, as they are styled, of the several colleges. Instead of confining themselves to a single science, which had satisfied the ambition of Burman or Bernouilli, they teach, or promise to teach, either history or mathematics, or ancient literature, or moral philosophy; and as it is possible that they may be defective in all, it is highly probable that of some they will be ignorant. They are paid, indeed, by private contributions; but their appointment depends on the head of the house: their diligence is voluntary, and will consequently be languid, while the pupils themselves, or their parents, are not indulged in the liberty of choice or change. The first tutor into whose hands I was resigned appears to have been one of the best of the tribe: Dr Waldegrave was a learned and pious man, of a mild disposition, strict morals, and abstemious life, who seldom mingled in the politics or the jollity of the college. But his knowledge of the world was confined to the university; his learning was of the last, rather than of the present age; his temper was indolent; his faculties, which were not of the

first rate, had been relaxed by the climate, and he was satisfied, like his fellows, with the slight and superficial discharge of an important trust. As soon as my tutor had sounded the insufficiency of his disciple in school-learning, he proposed that we should read every morning from ten to eleven the comedies of Terence. The sum of my improvement in the University of Oxford is confined to three or four Latin plays; and even the study of an elegant classic, which might have been illustrated by a comparison of ancient and modern theatres, was reduced to a dry and literal interpretation of the author's text. During the first weeks I constantly attended these lessons in my tutor's room; but as they appeared equally devoid of profit and pleasure, I was once tempted to try the experiment of a formal apology. The apology was accepted with a smile. I repeated the offence with less ceremony; the excuse was admitted with the same indulgence: the slightest motive of laziness or indisposition, the most trifling avocation at home or abroad, was allowed as a worthy impediment; nor did my tutor appear conscious of my absence or neglect. Had the hour of lecture been constantly filled, a single hour was a small portion of my academic leisure. No plan of study was recommended for my use; no exercises were prescribed for his inspection; and, at the most precious season of youth, whole days and weeks were suffered to elapse without labour or amusement, without advice or account. I should have listened to the voice of reason and of my tutor; his mild behaviour had gained my confidence. I preferred his society to that of the younger students; and in our evening walks to the top of Heddington Hill we freely conversed on a variety of subjects. Since the days of Pocock and Hyde, Oriental learning has always been the pride of Oxford, and I once expressed an inclination to study Arabic. His prudence discouraged this childish fancy; but he neglected the fair occasion of directing the ardour of a curious mind. During my absence in the summer vacation, Dr. Waldegrave accepted a college living at Washington in Sussex, and on my return I no longer found him at Oxford. From that time I have lost sight of my first tutor; but at the end of thirty years (1781) he was still alive; and the

practice of exercise and temperance had entitled him to a healthy old age.

The long recess between the Trinity and Michaelmas terms empties the colleges of Oxford as well as the courts of Westminster. I spent, at my father's house at Buriton in Hampshire, the two months of August and September. It is whimsical enough that as soon as I left Magdalen College my taste for books began to revive, but it was the same blind and boyish taste for the pursuit of exotic history. Unprovided with original learning, unformed in the habits of thinking, unskilled in the arts of composition, I resolved—to write a book. The title of this first essay, "The Age of Sesostris," was perhaps suggested by Voltaire's "Age of Louis XIV.," which was new and popular; but my sole object was to investigate the probable date of the life and reign of the conqueror of Asia. I was then enamoured of Sir John Marsham's "Canon Chronicus," an elaborate work, of whose merits and defects I was not yet qualified to judge. According to his specious, though narrow plan, I settled my hero about the time of Solomon, in the tenth century before the Christian era. It was therefore incumbent on me, unless I would adopt Sir Isaac Newton's shorter chronology, to remove a formidable objection, and my solution for a youth of fifteen is not devoid of ingenuity. In his version of the Sacred Books, Manetho the high priest has identified Sethosis, or Sesostris, with the elder brother of Danaus, who landed in Greece, according to the Parian Marble, 1510 years before Christ. But in my supposition the high priest is guilty of a voluntary error; flattery is the prolific parent of falsehood. Manetho's "History of Egypt" is dedicated to Ptolemy Philadelphus, who derived a fabulous or illegitimate pedigree from the Macedonian kings of the race of Hercules. Danaus is the ancestor of Hercules, and after the failure of the elder branch, his descendants, the Ptolemies, are the sole representatives of the royal family, and may claim by inheritance the kingdom which they hold by conquest. Such were my juvenile discoveries; at a riper age I no longer presume to connect the Greek, the Jewish, and the Egyptian antiquities, which are lost

in a distant cloud. Nor is this the only instance in which the belief and knowledge of the child are superseded by the more rational ignorance of the man. During my stay at Buriton my infant labour was diligently prosecuted, without much interruption from company or country diversions; and I already heard the music of public applause. The discovery of my own weakness was the first symptom of taste. On my return to Oxford "The Age of Sesostris" was wisely relinquished; but the imperfect sheets remained twenty years at the bottom of a drawer, till, in a general clearance of papers (November 1772), they were committed to the flames.

After the departure of Dr. Waldegrave, I was transferred with his other pupils to his academical heir, whose literary character did not command the respect of the college. Dr. —— well remembered that he had a salary to receive, and only forgot that he had a duty to perform. Instead of guiding the studies and watching over the behaviour of his disciple, I was never summoned to attend even the ceremony of a lecture; and, excepting one voluntary visit to his rooms during the eight months of his titular office, the tutor and pupil lived in the same college as strangers to each other. The want of experience, of advice, and of occupation, soon betrayed me into some improprieties of conduct, ill-chosen company, late hours, and inconsiderate expense. My growing debts might be secret, but my frequent absence was visible and scandalous; and a tour to Bath, a visit into Buckinghamshire, and four excursions to London in the same winter, were costly and dangerous frolics. They were, indeed, without a meaning, as without an excuse. The irksomeness of a cloistered life repeatedly tempted me to wander; but my chief pleasure was that of travelling; and I was too young and bashful to enjoy, like a manly Oxonian in town, the pleasures of London. In all these excursions I eloped from Oxford; I returned to college; in a few days I eloped again, as if I had been an independent stranger in a hired lodging, without once hearing the voice of admonition, without once feeling the hand of control. Yet my time was lost, my expenses were multiplied, my behaviour abroad was unknown;

folly as well as vice should have awakened the attention of my superiors, and my tender years would have justified a more than ordinary degree of restraint and discipline.

It might at least be expected that an ecclesiastical school should inculcate the orthodox principles of religion. But our venerable mother had contrived to unite the opposite extremes of bigotry and indifference. An heretic or unbeliever was a monster in her eyes; but she was always, or often, or sometimes, remiss in the spiritual education of her own children. (According to the statutes of the university, every student, before he is matriculated, must subscribe his assent to the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England, which are signed by more than read, and read by more than believe them.) My insufficient age excused me, however, from the immediate performance of this legal ceremony; and the Vice-Chancellor directed me to return as soon as I should have accomplished my fifteenth year, recommending me in the meanwhile to the instruction of my college. My college forgot to instruct, I forgot to return, and was myself forgotten by the first magistrate of the university. Without a single lecture, either public or private, either Christian or Protestant, without any academical subscription, without any episcopal confirmation, I was left by the dim light of my catechism to grope my way to the chapel and communion-table, where I was admitted without a question how far or by what means I might be qualified to receive the sacrament. Such almost incredible neglect was productive of the worst mischiefs. From my childhood I had been fond of religious disputation; my poor aunt has been often puzzled by the mysteries which she strove to believe; nor had the elastic spring been totally broken by the weight of the atmosphere of Oxford. The blind activity of idleness urged me to advance without armour into the dangerous mazes of controversy, and at the age of sixteen I bewildered myself in the errors of the Church of Rome.

The progress of my conversion may tend to illustrate, at least, the history of my own mind. It was not long since Dr. Middleton's free inquiry had founded an alarm in the theological world:

much ink and much gall had been spilt in the defence of the primitive miracles; and the two dullest of their champions were crowned with academic honours by the University of Oxford. The name of Middleton was unpopular, and his proscription very naturally led me to peruse his writings and those of his antagonists. His bold criticism, which approaches the precipice of infidelity, produced on my mind a singular effect; and had I persevered in the communion of Rome, I should now apply to my own fortune the prediction of the Sybil—

"Via prima salutis,
Quod minimè reris, Graiâ pandetur ab urbe."

The elegance of style and freedom of argument were repelled by a shield of prejudice. I still revered the character, or rather the names, of the saints and fathers whom Dr. Middleton exposes; nor could he destroy my implicit belief that the gift of miraculous powers was continued in the Church during the first four or five centuries of Christianity. But I was unable to resist the weight of historical evidence that within the same period most of the leading doctrines of popery were already introduced in theory and practice; nor was my conclusion absurd, that miracles are the test of truth, and that the Church must be orthodox and pure which was so often approved by the visible interposition of the Deity. The marvellous tales which are so boldly attested by the Basils and Chrysostoms, the Austins and Jeromes, compelled me to embrace the superior merits of celibacy, the institution of the monastic life, the use of the sign of the cross, of holy oil, and even of images; the invocation of saints, the worship of relics, the rudiments of purgatory in prayers for the dead, and the tremendous mystery of the sacrifice of the body and blood of Christ, which insensibly swelled into the prodigy of transubstantiation. In these dispositions, and already more than half a convert, I formed an unlucky intimacy with a young gentleman of our college, whose name I shall spare. With a character less resolute, Mr. —— had imbibed the same religious opinions; and some popish books, I know not through what channel, were conveyed into his posses-

sion. I read, I applauded, I believed: the English translations of two famous works of Bossuet, Bishop of Meaux, the "Exposition of the Catholic Doctrine," and the "History of the Protestant Variations," achieved my conversion, and I surely fell by a noble hand.[1] I have since examined the originals with a more discerning eye, and shall not hesitate to pronounce that Bossuet is indeed a master of all the weapons of controversy. In the Exposition, a specious apology, the orator assumes with consummate art the tone of candour and simplicity; and the ten-horned monster is transformed at his magic touch into the milk-white hind, who must be loved as soon as she is seen. In the History, a bold and well-aimed attack, he displays, with a happy mixture of narrative and argument, the faults and follies, the changes and contradictions of our first reformers, whose variations (as he dexterously contends) are the mark of historical error, while the perpetual unity of the Catholic Church is the sign and test of infallible truth. To my present feelings it seems incredible that I should ever believe that I believed in transubstantiation. But my conqueror oppressed me with the sacramental words, "Hoc est corpus meum," and dashed against each other the figurative half-meanings of the Protestant sects. Every objection was resolved into omnipotence; and after repeating at St. Mary's the Athanasian Creed, I humbly acquiesced in the mystery of the Real Presence.

"To take up half on trust, and half to try,
Name it not faith, but bungling bigotry.
Both knave and fool the merchant we may call,
To pay great sums and to compound the small,
For who would break with Heaven and would not break for all?"

No sooner had I settled my new religion than I resolved to profess myself a Catholic. Youth is sincere and impetuous, and a

[1] Mr. Gibbon never talked with me on the subject of his conversion to popery but once, and then he imputed his change to the works of Parsons the Jesuit, who lived in the reign of Elizabeth, and who, he said, had urged all the best arguments in favour of the Roman Catholic religion.—S.

momentary glow of enthusiasm had raised me above all temporal considerations.[1]

By the keen Protestants, who would gladly retaliate the example of persecution, a clamour is raised of the increase of popery; and they are always loud to declaim against the toleration of priests and Jesuits, who pervert so many of His Majesty's subjects from their religion and allegiance. On the present occasion, the fall of one or more of her sons directed this clamour against the university; and it was confidently affirmed that popish missionaries were suffered, under various disguises, to introduce themselves into the colleges of Oxford. But justice obliges me to declare, that as far as relates to myself, this assertion is false, and that I never conversed with a priest, or even with a papist, till my resolution from books was absolutely fixed. In my last excursion to London, I addressed myself to Mr. Lewis, a Roman Catholic bookseller in Russell Street, Covent Garden, who recommended me to a priest, of whose name and order I am at present ignorant. In our first interview he soon discovered that persuasion was needless. After sounding the motives and merits of my conversion, he consented to admit me into the pale of the Church; and at his feet, on the 8th of June 1753, I solemnly, though privately, abjured the errors of heresy. The seduction of an English youth of family and fortune was an act of as much danger as glory, but he bravely overlooked the danger, of which I was not then sufficiently informed. "When a person is reconciled to the See of Rome, or procures others to be reconciled, the offence" (says Blackstone) "amounts to high treason." And if the humanity of the age would prevent the execution of this sanguinary statute, there were other laws of a less odious cast, which condemned the priest to perpetual imprisonment, and transferred the proselyte's estate to his nearest relation. An elaborate controversial epistle, approved by my director, and addressed to my father, announced and justified the step which I had taken. My father was neither a bigot nor a philosopher, but his affection deplored the loss of

[1] He described the letter to his father announcing his conversion as written with all the pomp, the dignity, and self-satisfaction of a martyr.—S.

an only son, and his good sense was astonished at my strange departure from the religion of my country. In the first sally of passion he divulged a secret which prudence might have suppressed, and the gates of Magdalen College were for ever shut against my return. Many years afterwards, when the name of Gibbon was become as notorious as that of Middleton, it was industriously whispered at Oxford that the historian had formerly "turned papist." My character stood exposed to the reproach of inconstancy; and this invidious topic would have been handled without mercy by my opponents could they have separated my cause from that of the university. For my own part, I am proud of an honest sacrifice of interest to conscience. I can never blush if my tender mind was entangled in the sophistry that seduced the acute and manly understandings of Chillingworth and Bayle, who afterwards emerged from superstition to scepticism.

While Charles the First governed England, and was himself governed by a Catholic queen, it cannot be denied that the missionaries of Rome laboured with impunity and success in the court, the country, and even the universities. One of the sheep,

> "Whom the grim wolf with privy paw
> Daily devours apace, and nothing said,"

is Mr. William Chillingworth, Master of Arts, and Fellow of Trinity College, Oxford, who, at the ripe age of twenty-eight years, was persuaded to elope from Oxford to the English seminary at Douay in Flanders. Some disputes with Fisher, a subtle Jesuit, might first awaken him from the prejudices of education; but he yielded to his own victorious argument, "that there must be somewhere an infallible judge, and that the Church of Rome is the only Christian society which either does or can pretend to that character." After a short trial of a few months Mr. Chillingworth was again tormented by religious scruples. He returned home, resumed his studies, unravelled his mistakes, and delivered his mind from the yoke of authority and superstition. His new creed was built on the principle that the Bible is our sole judge, and private reason our sole interpreter; and he ably maintains this

principle in the "Religion of a Protestant," a book which, after startling the Doctors of Oxford, is still esteemed the most solid defence of the Reformation. The learning, the virtue, the recent merits of the author, entitled him to fair preferment; but the slave had now broken his fetters, and the more he weighed the less was he disposed to subscribe to the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England. In a private letter he declares, with all the energy of language, that he could not subscribe to them without subscribing to his own damnation; and that if ever he should depart from this immovable resolution, he would allow his friends to think him a madman or an atheist. As the letter is without a date, we cannot ascertain the number of weeks or months that elapsed between this passionate abhorrence and the Salisbury Register, which is still extant. "Ego Gulielmus Chillingworth, . . . omnibus hisce articulis, . . . et singulis in iisdem contentis volens, et ex animo subscribo, et consensum meum iisdem præbeo. 20 die Julii 1638." But, alas! the chancellor and prebendary of Sarum soon deviated from his own subscription. As he more deeply scrutinised the article of the Trinity, neither Scripture nor the Primitive Fathers could long uphold his orthodox belief; and he could not but confess "that the doctrine of Arius is either a truth, or at least no damnable heresy." From this middle region of the air the descent of his reason would naturally rest on the firmer ground of the Socinians; and if we may credit a doubtful story, and the popular opinion, his anxious inquiries at last subsided in philosophic indifference. So conspicuous, however, were the candour of his nature and the innocence of his heart, that this apparent levity did not affect the reputation of Chillingworth. His frequent changes proceeded from too nice an inquisition into truth. His doubts grew out of himself; he assisted them with all the strength of his reason. He was then too hard for himself; but finding as little quiet and repose in those victories, he quickly recovered by a new appeal to his own judgment, so that in all his sallies and retreats he was in fact his own convert.

Bayle was the son of a Calvinist minister in a remote province of France, at the foot of the Pyrenees. For the benefit of educa-

tion the Protestants were tempted to risk their children in the Catholic universities; and in the twenty-second year of his age, young Bayle was seduced by the arts and arguments of the Jesuits of Toulouse. He remained about seventeen months (19th March 1669—19th August 1670) in their hands, a voluntary captive; and a letter to his parents, which the new convert composed or subscribed (15th April 1670), is darkly tinged with the spirit of popery. But Nature had designed him to think as he pleased, and to speak as he thought: his piety was offended by the excessive worship of creatures; and the study of physics convinced him of the impossibility of transubstantiation, which is abundantly refuted by the testimony of our senses. His return to the communion of a falling sect was a bold and disinterested step, that exposed him to the rigour of the laws; and a speedy flight to Geneva protected him from the resentment of his spiritual tyrants, unconscious as they were of the full value of the prize which they had lost. Had Bayle adhered to the Catholic Church, had he embraced the ecclesiastical profession, the genius and favour of such a proselyte might have aspired to wealth and honours in his native country; but the hypocrite would have found less happiness in the comforts of a benefice or the dignity of a mitre than he enjoyed at Rotterdam in a private state of exile, indigence, and freedom. Without a country, or a patron, or a prejudice, he claimed the liberty and subsisted by the labours of his pen: the inequality of his voluminous works is explained and excused by his alternately writing for himself, for the booksellers, and for posterity; and if a severe critic would reduce him to a single folio, that relic, like the books of the Sybil, would become still more valuable. A calm and lofty spectator of the religious tempest, the philosopher of Rotterdam condemned with equal firmness the persecution of Louis the Fourteenth and the republican maxims of the Calvinists, their vain prophecies, and the intolerant bigotry which sometimes vexed his solitary retreat. In reviewing the controversies of the times, he turned against each other the arguments of the disputants. Successively wielding the arms of the Catholics and Protestants, he proves that neither the

way of authority nor the way of examination can afford the multitude any test of religious truth; and dexterously concludes that custom and education must be the sole grounds of popular belief. The ancient paradox of Plutarch, that atheism is less pernicious than superstition, acquires a tenfold vigour when it is adorned with the colours of his wit and pointed with the acuteness of his logic. His critical dictionary is a vast repository of facts and opinions; and he balances the false religions in his sceptical scales till the opposite quantities (if I may use the language of algebra) annihilate each other. The wonderful power which he so boldly exercised, of assembling doubts and objections, had tempted him jocosely to assume the title of the νεφεληγερετα Ζευς, the cloud-compelling Jove; and in a conversation with the ingenious Abbé (afterwards Cardinal) de Polignac, he freely disclosed his universal Pyrrhonism. "I am most truly," said Bayle, "a Protestant; for I protest indifferently against all systems and all sects."

The academical resentment which I may possibly have provoked will prudently spare this plain narrative of my studies, or rather of my idleness; and of the unfortunate event which shortened the term of my residence at Oxford. But it may be suggested that my father was unlucky in the choice of a society and the chance of a tutor. It will perhaps be asserted that in the lapse of forty years many improvements have taken place in the college and in the university. I am not unwilling to believe that some tutors might have been found more active than Dr. Waldegrave, and less contemptible than Dr. ——. About the same time, and in the same walk, a Bentham was still treading in the footsteps of a Burton, whose maxims he had adopted, and whose life he had published. The biographer indeed preferred the school logic to the new philosophy, Burgursdicius to Locke; and the hero appears, in his own writings, a stiff and conceited pedant. Yet even these men, according to the measure of their capacity, might be diligent and useful; and it is recorded of Burton that he taught his pupils what he knew—some Latin, some Greek, some ethics and metaphysics—referring them to proper

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The academical resentment which I may possibly have provoked will prudently spare this plain narrative of my studies, or rather of my idleness; and of the unfortunate event which shortened the term of my residence at Oxford. But it may be suggested that my father was unlucky in the choice of a society and the chance of a tutor. It will perhaps be asserted that in the lapse of forty years many improvements have taken place in the college and in the university. I am not unwilling to believe that some tutors might have been found more active than Dr. Waldegrave, and less contemptible than Dr. ——. About the same time, and in the same walk, a Bentham was still treading in the footsteps of a Burton, whose maxims he had adopted, and whose life he had published. The biographer indeed preferred the school logic to the new philosophy, Burgursdicius to Locke; and the hero appears, in his own writings, a stiff and conceited pedant. Yet even these men, according to the measure of their capacity, might be diligent and useful; and it is recorded of Burton that he taught his pupils what he knew—some Latin, some Greek, some ethics and metaphysics—referring them to proper

masters for the languages and sciences of which he was ignorant. At a more recent period many students have been attracted by the merit and reputation of Sir William Scott, then a tutor in University College, and now conspicuous in the profession of the civil law: my personal acquaintance with that gentleman has inspired me with a just esteem for his abilities and knowledge; and I am assured that his lectures on history would compose, were they given to the public, a most valuable treatise. Under the auspices of the present Archbishop of York, Dr. Markham, himself an eminent scholar, a more regular discipline has been introduced, as I am told, at Christ Church.[1] A course of classical and philosophical studies is proposed, and even pursued, in that numerous seminary: learning has been made a duty, a pleasure,

[1] This was written on the information Mr. Gibbon had received, and the observation he had made, previous to his late residence at Lausanne. During his last visit to England, he had an opportunity of seeing at Sheffield Place some young men of the college above alluded to; he had great satisfaction in conversing with them, made many inquiries respecting their course of study, applauded the discipline of Christ Church, and the liberal attention shown by the Dean, to those whose only recommendation was their merit. Had Mr. Gibbon lived to revise this work, I am sure he would have mentioned the name of Dr. Jackson with the highest commendation. There are other colleges at Oxford, with whose discipline my friend was unacquainted, to which, without doubt, he would willingly have allowed their due praise, particularly Brazen Nose and Oriel Colleges; the former under the care of Dr. Cleaver, Bishop of Chester, the latter under that of Dr. Eveleigh. It is still greatly to be wished that the general expense, or rather extravagance, of young men at our English universities may be more effectually restrained. The expense, in which they are permitted to indulge, is inconsistent not only with a necessary degree of study, but with those habits of morality which should be promoted, by all means possible, at an early period of life. An academical education in England is at present an object of alarm and terror to every thinking parent of moderate fortune. It is the apprehension of the expense, of the dissipation, and other evil consequences, which arise from the want of proper restraint at our own universities, that forces a number of our English youths to those of Scotland, and utterly excludes many from any sort of academical instruction. If a charge be true, which I have heard insisted on, that the heads of our colleges in Oxford and Cambridge are vain of having under their care chiefly men of opulence, who may be supposed exempt from the necessity of economical control, they are indeed highly censurable; since the mischief of allowing early habits of expense and dissipation is great, in various respects, even to those possessed of large property; and the most serious evil from this indulgence must happen to youths of humbler fortune, who certainly form the majority of students both at Oxford and Cambridge.—S.

and even a fashion; and several young gentlemen do honour to the college in which they have been educated. According to the will of the donor, the profit of the second part of Lord Clarendon's History has been applied to the establishment of a riding-school, that the polite exercises might be taught, I know not with what success, in the university. The Vinerian professorship is of far more serious importance; the laws of his country are the first science of an Englishman of rank and fortune who is called to be a magistrate, and may hope to be a legislator. This judicious institution was coldly entertained by the graver Doctors, who complained (I have heard the complaint) that it would take the young people from their books; but Mr. Viner's benefaction is not unprofitable, since it has at least produced the excellent commentaries of Sir William Blackstone.

After carrying me to Putney, to the house of his friend Mr. Mallet,[1] by whose philosophy I was rather scandalised than reclaimed, it was necessary for my father to form a new plan of education, and to devise some method which if possible might effect the cure of my spiritual malady. After much debate it was determined, from the advice and personal experience of Mr. Eliot (now Lord Eliot), to fix me, during some years, at Lausanne in Switzerland. Mr. Frey, a Swiss gentleman of Basil, undertook the conduct of the journey. We left London the 19th of June, crossed the sea from Dover to Calais, travelled post through several provinces of France by the direct road of St. Quentin, Rheims, Langres, Besançon, and arrived the 30th of June at Lausanne, where I was immediately settled under the roof and tuition of M. Pavilliard, a Calvinist minister.

The first marks of my father's displeasure rather astonished than afflicted me. When he threatened to banish, and disown, and disinherit a rebellious son, I cherished a secret hope that he would not be able or willing to effect his menaces, and the pride of conscience encouraged me to sustain the honourable and important part which I was now acting. My spirits were raised

[1] Lord Bolingbroke had died in 1751, and David Mallet, his literary executor, was at this time preparing an edition of his Philosophical Writings.

and kept alive by the rapid motion of my journey, the new and various scenes of the Continent, and the civility of Mr. Frey, a man of sense, who was not ignorant of books or the world. But after he had resigned me into Pavilliard's hands, and I was fixed in my new habitation, I had leisure to contemplate the strange and melancholy prospect before me. My first complaint arose from my ignorance of the language. In my childhood I had once studied the French grammar, and I could imperfectly understand the easy prose of a familiar subject. But when I was thus suddenly cast on a foreign land, I found myself deprived of the use of speech and of hearing; and, during some weeks, incapable not only of enjoying the pleasures of conversation, but even of asking or answering a question in the common intercourse of life. To a home-bred Englishman every object, every custom was offensive; but the native of any country might have been disgusted with the general aspect of his lodging and entertainment. I had now exchanged my elegant apartment in Magdalen College for a narrow, gloomy street, the most unfrequented of an unhandsome town, for an old inconvenient house, and for a small chamber ill-contrived and ill-furnished, which, on the approach of winter, instead of a companionable fire, must be warmed by the dull invisible heat of a stove. From a man I was again degraded to the dependence of a school-boy. M. Pavilliard managed my expenses, which had been reduced to a diminutive state. I received a small monthly allowance for my pocket-money, and helpless and awkward as I have ever been, I no longer enjoyed the indispensable comfort of a servant. My condition seemed as destitute of hope as it was devoid of pleasure. I was separated for an indefinite, which appeared an infinite term from my native country, and I had lost all connection with my Catholic friends. I have since reflected with surprise that, as the Romish clergy of every part of Europe maintain a close correspondence with each other, they never attempted, by letters or messages, to rescue me from the hands of the heretics, or at least to confirm my zeal and constancy in the profession of the faith. Such was my first introduction to Lausanne, a place where I spent nearly five years with

pleasure and profit, which I afterwards revisited without compulsion, and which I have finally selected as the most grateful retreat for the decline of my life.

But it is the peculiar felicity of youth that the most unpleasing objects and events seldom make a deep or lasting impression—it forgets the past, enjoys the present, and anticipates the future. At the flexible age of sixteen I soon learned to endure, and gradually to adopt, the new forms of arbitrary manners. The real hardships of my situation were alienated by time. Had I been sent abroad in a more splendid style, such as the fortune and bounty of my father might have supplied, I might have returned home with the same stock of language and science which our countrymen usually import from the Continent. An exile and a prisoner as I was, their example betrayed me into some irregularities of wine, of play, and of idle excursions; but I soon felt the impossibility of associating with them on equal terms, and after the departure of my first acquaintance, I held a cold and civil correspondence with their successors. This seclusion from English society was attended with the most solid benefits. In the Pays de Vaud, the French language is used with less imperfection than in most of the distant provinces of France. In Pavilliard's family, necessity compelled me to listen and to speak, and if I was at first disheartened by the apparent slowness, in a few months I was astonished by the rapidity of my progress. My pronunciation was formed by the constant repetition of the same sounds; the variety of words and idioms, the rules of grammar, and distinctions of genders, were impressed in my memory; ease and freedom were obtained by practice; correctness and elegance by labour; and before I was recalled home, French, in which I spontaneously thought, was more familiar than English to my ear, my tongue, and my pen. The first effect of this opening knowledge was the revival of my love of reading, which had been chilled at Oxford; and I soon turned over, without much choice, almost all the French books in my tutor's library. Even these amusements were productive of real advantage. My taste and judgment were now somewhat riper. I was introduced to a new mode of

style and literature: by the comparison of manners and opinions my views were enlarged, my prejudices were corrected, and a copious voluntary abstract of the "Histoire de l'Eglise et de l'Empire," by Le Sueur, may be placed in a middle line between my childish and my manly studies. As soon as I was able to converse with the natives, I began to feel some satisfaction in their company. My awkward timidity was polished and emboldened, and I frequented, for the first time, assemblies of men and women. The acquaintance of the Pavilliards prepared me by degrees for more elegant society. I was received with kindness and indulgence in the best families of Lausanne, and it was in one of these that I formed an intimate and lasting connection with M. Deyverdun, a young man of an amiable temper and excellent understanding. In the arts of fencing and dancing, small indeed was my proficiency, and some months were idly wasted in the riding-school. My unfitness to bodily exercise reconciled me to a sedentary life, and the horse, the favourite of my countrymen, never contributed to the pleasures of my youth.

My obligations to the lessons of M. Pavilliard, gratitude will not suffer me to forget. He was endowed with a clear head and a warm heart; his innate benevolence had assuaged the spirit of the Church; he was rational, because he was moderate. In the course of his studies he had acquired a just though superficial knowledge of most branches of literature; by long practice he was skilled in the arts of teaching; and he laboured with assiduous patience to know the character, gain the affection, and open the mind of his English pupil.[1] As soon as we began to under-

[1] *Extract of a Letter from* M. PAVILLIARD *to* EDWARD GIBBON, Esq.

A LAUSANNE, *ce* 25 *Juillet* 1753.

Monsieur de Gibbon se porte trés bien par la Grace de Dieu, et il me paroit qu'il ne se trouve pas mal de nôtre Maison; j'ai même lieu de penser qu'il prend de l'attachement pour moi, ce dont je suis charmé et que je travaillerai a augmenter, parce qu'il aura plus de confiance en moi, dans ce que je me propose de lui dire.

Je n'ai point encore entrepris de lui parler sur les matieres de religion, parce que je n'entens pas assez la langue Angloise pour soutenir une longue conversation en cette langue, quoique je lise les auteurs Anglois avec assez de facilité; et Monsieur de Gibbon n'entend pas assez de François, mais il y fait beaucoup de progrès.

Je suis fort content de la politesse et de la douceur de caractere de Monsieur

stand each other, he gently led me, from a blind and undistinguishing love of reading, into the path of instruction. I consented with pleasure that a portion of the morning hours should be consecrated to a plan of modern history and geography, and to the critical perusal of the French and Latin classics; and at each step I felt myself invigorated by the habits of application and method. His prudence repressed and dissembled some youthful sallies; and as soon as I was confirmed in the habits of industry and temperance, he gave the reins into my own hands. His favourable report of my behaviour and progress gradually obtained some latitude of action and expense; and he wished to alleviate the hardships of my lodging and entertainment. The principles of philosophy were associated with the examples of taste; and by a singular chance, the book, as well as the man, which contributed the most effectually to my education, has a stronger claim on my gratitude than on my admiration. M. De Crousaz, the adversary of Bayle and Pope, is not distinguished by lively fancy or profound reflection; and even in his own country, at the end of a few years, his name and writings are almost obliterated. But his philosophy had been formed in the school of Locke, his divinity in that of Limborch and Le Clerc. In a long and laborious life, several generations of pupils were taught to think, and even to write. His lessons rescued the academy of Lausanne from Calvinistic prejudice; and he had the rare merit of diffusing a more liberal spirit among the clergy and people of the Pays de Vaud. His system of logic, which in the

votre Fils, et je me flatte que je pouvrai toujours vous parler de lui avec eloge; il s'applique beaucoup à la lecture.

From the Same to the Same.

À LAUSANNE, *ce* 13 *Aout* 1753.

Monsieur de Gibbon se porte bien par la grace de Dieu; je l'aime, et je me suis extrémement attaché à lui parce qu'il est doux et tranquille. Pour ce que regard ses sentimens, quoique je ne lui aie encore rien dit la dessus, j'ai lieu d'esperer qu'il ouvrira les yeux à la verité. Je le pense ainsi, parce qu'étant dans mon cabinet il a choisi deux livres de controverse qu'il a pris dans sa chambre et qu'il les lit. Il m'a chargé de vous offrir ses très humble respects, et de vous demander la permission de le laisser monter au manege: cet exercise pourroit contribuer à donner de la force à son corps, c'est l'idée qu'il en a.

last editions has swelled to six tedious and prolix volumes, may be praised as a clear and methodical abridgment of the art of reasoning, from our simple ideas to the most complex operations of the human understanding. This system I studied, and meditated, and abstracted, till I have obtained the free command of an universal instrument, which I soon presumed to exercise on my Catholic opinions. Pavilliard was not unmindful that his first task, his most important duty, was to reclaim me from the errors of popery. The intermixture of sects has rendered the Swiss clergy acute and learned on the topics of controversy; and I have some of his letters in which he celebrates the dexterity of his attack, and my gradual concessions, after a firm and well-managed defence.[1] I was willing, and I am now willing, to allow him a handsome share of the honour of my conversion: yet I must observe, that it was principally effected by my private reflections; and I still remember my solitary transport at the discovery of a philosophical argument against the doctrine of transubstantiation: that the text of Scripture, which seems to inculcate the real presence, is attested only by a single sense—our sight; while the real presence itself is disproved by three of our senses—the sight, the touch, and the taste. The various articles of the Romish creed disappeared like a dream; and after a full conviction, on Christmas Day 1754, I received the sacrament in the Church of Lausanne. It was here that I suspended my religious inquiries, acquiescing with implicit belief in the tenets and mysteries which are adopted by the general consent of Catholics and Protestants.[2]

[1] M. Pavilliard has described to me the astonishment with which he gazed on Mr. Gibbon standing before him: a thin little figure, with a large head, disputing and urging, with the greatest ability, all the best arguments that had ever been used in favour of popery. Mr. Gibbon many years ago became very fat and corpulent, but he had uncommonly small bones, and was very slight made.—S.

[2] *Letter from* M. PAVILLIARD *to* EDWARD GIBBON, Esq.

June 26th, 1754.

MONSIEUR,—J'espère que vous pardonnerez mon long silence en faveur des nouvelles que j'ai à vous apprendre. Si j'ai tant tardé, ce n'a été ni par oubli, ni par negligence, mais je croyois de semaine en semaine pouvoir vous annoncer que Monsieur votre fils avoit entierement renoncé aux fausses idées qu'il avoit embrassées;

Such, from my arrival at Lausanne, during the first eighteen or twenty months (July 1753—March 1755), were my useful studies, the foundation of all my future improvements. But every man

mais il a fallu disputer le terrein pié à pié, et je n'ai pas trouvé en lui un homme leger, et qui passe rapidement d'un sentiment à un autre. Souvent après avoir detruit toutes ses idées sur un article de maniere qu'il n'avoit rien à repliquer, ce qu'il avouoit sans detour, il me disoit qu'il ne croioit pas, qu'il n'y eut rien à me repondre. La dessus je n'ai pas jugé qu'il fallut le pousser à bout, et extorquer de lui un aveu que son cœur desavoueroit; je lui donnois alors du tems pour réfléchir; tous mes livres etoient à sa disposition; je revenois à la charge quand il m'avouoit qu'il avoit etudié la matiere aussi bien qu'il l'avoit pu, et enfin j'etablissoit une verité.

Je me persuadois, que quand j'aurois detruit les principales erreurs de l'eglise Romaine, je n'aurois qu'à faire voir que les autres sont des consequences des premières, et qu'elles ne peuvent subsister quand les fundamentales sont renversées; mais, comme je l'ai dit, je me suis trompé, il a fallu traitter chaque article dans son entier. Par la grace de Dieu, je n'ai pas perdu mon tems, et aujourdhui, si meme il conserve quelques restes de ses pernicieuses erreurs, j'ose dire qu'il n'est plus membre de l'eglise Romaine; voici dans où nous en sommes.

J'ai renversé l'infallibilité de l'eglise; j'ai prouvé que jamais St. Pierre n'a été chef des apôtres: que quand il l'auroit été, le pape n'est point son successeur; qu'il est douteuse que St. Pierre a jamais été à Rome, mais supposé qu'il y ait été, il n'a pas été evêque de cette ville: que la transubstantiation est un invention humaine, et peu ancienne dans l'eglise; que l'adoration de l'Eucharist et le retranchement de la coupe sont contraires à la parole de Dieu: qu'il y a des saints, mais que nous ne savons pas que ils sont, et par consequent qu'on ne peut pas le prier; que le respect et le culte qu'on rend aux reliques est condamnable; qu'il n'y a point de purgatoire, et que la doctrine des indulgences est fausse: que la Careme et les jeunes du Vendredi et du Samedi sont ridicules aujourdhui, et de la maniere que l'eglise Romaine les prescrit: que les imputations que l'eglise de Rome nous fait de varier dans notre doctrine, et d'avoir pour reformateurs des personnes dont la conduite et les mœurs ont été en scandale, sont entierement fausses.

Vous comprenez bien, Monsieur, que ces articles sont d'un longue discussion, qu'il a fallu du tems à Monsieur votre fils pour mediter mes raisons et pour y chercher des reponses. Je lui ai demandé plusieurs fois, si mes preuves et mes raisons lui paroissoient convainquantes; il m'a toujours assuré qu'oui, de façon que j'ose assurer, aussi comme je le lui a dit à lui meme, il y a peu de tems qu'il n'étoit plus catholique Romain. Je me flatte, qu'après avoir obtenu la victoire sur ces articles, je l'aurai sur le reste avec le secours de Dieu. Tellement que je compte de vous marquer dans peu que cette ouvrage est fini, je dois vous dire encore, que quoique j'ai trouvé Monsieur votre fils très ferme dans ses idées, je l'ai trouvé raisonnable, qu'il s'est rendu à la lumière, et qu'il n'est pas, ce qu'on appelle, chicaneur. Par raport à l'article du jeune le Vendredi et Samedi, long tems apres que je vous eus ecrit qu'il n'avoit jamais marqué qu'il voulut l'observer, environ le commencement du mois de Mars je m'aperçus un Vendredi qu'il ne mangeoit point de viande; je lui parlai en particulier pour en savoir la raison, craignant que ce ne fut par indisposition; il me repondit qu'il l'avoit fait à dessein, et qu'il avoit cru être obligé de se conformer à la pratique d'un eglise dont il etoit membre: nous parlames quelques tems sur ce sujet; il m'assura qu'il n'invisageoit cela que comme une pratique bonne à la verité, et qu'il devoit suivre, quoiqu'il ne la crus pas sainte en elle meme,

who rises above the common level has received two educations: the first from his teachers; the second, more personal and important, from himself. He will not, like the fanatics of the last age, define the moment of grace; but he cannot forget the era of his life in which his mind has expanded to its proper form and dimensions. My worthy tutor had the good sense and modesty to discern how far he could be useful: as soon as he felt that I advanced beyond his speed and measure he wisely left me to my genius; and the hours of lesson were soon lost in the voluntary labour of the whole morning, and sometimes of the whole day. The desire of prolonging my time gradually confirmed the salutary habit of early rising, to which I have always adhered, with some regard to seasons and situations; but it is happy for my eyes and my health that my temperate ardour has never been seduced to trespass on the hours of the night. During the last three years of my residence at Lausanne, I may assume the merit of serious and solid application; but I am tempted to distinguish the last eight months of the year 1755 as the period of the most extraordinary diligence and rapid progress.[1] In my French and Latin translations I adopted an excellent method, which, from my own success, I would recommend to the imitation of students. I chose some classic writer, such as Cicero and Vertot, the most approved for purity and elegance of style. I translated, for instance, an epistle of Cicero into French; and after throwing it

ni d'institution divine. Je ne crus pas devoir insister pour lors, ni le forcer à agir contre ses lumières: j'ai traitté cette article qu'est certainement un des moins importans, des moins fondés; et cependant il m'a fallu un tems considerable pour le detromper, et pour lui faire comprendre qu'il avoit tort de s'assujettir à la pratique d'un Eglise qu'il ne reconnoissoit plus pour infaillible; que si meme cette pratique avoit eu quelque utilité dans son institution, cependant elle n'en avoit aucune en elle meme, puis qu'elle ne contribuoit en rien a la pureté des mœurs; qu'ainsi il n'y avoit aucune raison, ni dans l'institution de cette pratique, ni dans la pratique en elle même, que l'autorisât a s'y soumettre: qu'aujourdhui ce n'etoit qu'une affaire d'interet, puis qu'avec de l'argent on obtennoit des dispenses pour manger gras, &c., de manier que je l'ai ramené à la liberté Chretienne avec beaucoup de peine et seulement depuis quelques semaines. Je l'ai engagé a vous ecrire, pour vous manifester les sentimens où il est, et l'etat de sa santé, et je crois qu'il l'a fait.

[1] *Journal, December* 1755.—In finishing this year, I must remark how favourable it was to my studies. In the space of eight months, from the beginning of April, I learnt the principles of drawing; made myself complete master of the

aside till the words and phrases were obliterated from my memory, I re-translated my French into such Latin as I could find, and then compared each sentence of my imperfect version with the ease, the grace, the propriety of the Roman orator. A similar experiment was made on several pages of the Revolutions of Vertot; I turned them into Latin, returned them after a sufficient interval into my own French, and again scrutinised the resemblance or dissimilitude of the copy and the original. By degrees I was less ashamed, by degrees I was more satisfied with myself; and I persevered in the practice of these double translations, which filled several books, till I had acquired the knowledge of both idioms, and the command at least of a correct style. This useful exercise of writing was accompanied and succeeded by the more pleasing occupation of reading the best authors. The perusal of the Roman classics was at once my exercise and reward. Dr. Middleton's History, which I then appreciated above its true value, naturally directed me to the writings of Cicero. The most perfect editions, that of Olivet, which may adorn the shelves of the rich, that of Ernesti, which should lie on the table of the learned, were not in my power. For the familiar epistles I used the text and English commentary of Bishop Ross; but my general edition was that of Verburgius, published at Amsterdam in two large volumes in folio, with an indifferent choice of various notes. I read, with application and pleasure, all the epistles, all the orations, and the most important treatises of rhetoric and philosophy; and as I read I applauded the observation of Quintillian, that every student may judge of his own proficiency by the satisfaction which he receives from the Roman

French and Latin languages, with which I was very superficially acquainted before, and wrote and translated a great deal in both; read Cicero's Epistles ad Familiares, his Brutus, all his Orations, his Dialogues de Amicitiâ, and de Senectute; Terence twice; and Pliny's Epistles. In French, Giannone's History of Naples, and l'Abbé Bannier's Mythology, and M. de Boehat's Memoirs sur la Suisse, and wrote a very ample relation of my tour. I likewise began to study Greek, and went through the grammar. I begun to make very large collections of what I read. But what I esteem most of all, from the perusal and meditation of De Crousaz's Logic, I not only understood the principles of that science, but formed my mind to a habit of thinking and reasoning I had no idea before.

orator. (I tasted the beauties of language, I breathed the spirit of freedom, and I imbibed from his precepts and examples the public and private sense of a man.) (Cicero in Latin, and Xenophon in Greek) are indeed the two ancients whom I would first propose to a liberal scholar; not only for the merit of their style and sentiments, but for the admirable lessons which may be applied almost to every situation of public and private life. (Cicero's Epistles may in particular afford the models of every form of correspondence, from the careless effusions of tenderness and friendship to the well-guarded declaration of discreet and dignified resentment) After finishing this great author, a library of eloquence and reason, I formed a more extensive plan of reviewing the Latin classics[1] under the four divisions of—1. Historians; 2. Poets; 3. Orators; and 4. Philosophers, in a chronological series, from the days of Plautus and Sallust to the decline of the language and empire of Rome; and this plan, in the last twenty-seven months of my residence at Lausanne (January 1756—April 1758), I nearly accomplished. Nor was this review, however rapid, either hasty or superficial. I indulged myself in a second and even a third perusal of Terence, Virgil, Horace, Tacitus, &c., and studied to imbibe the sense and spirit most congenial to my own. I never suffered a difficult or corrupt passage to escape till I had viewed it in every light of which it was susceptible; though often disappointed, I always consulted the most learned or ingenious commentators, Torrentius and Dacier on Horace, Catrou and Servius on Virgil, Lipsius on Tacitus, Meziriac on Ovid, &c.; and in the ardour of my inquiries I embraced a large circle of historical and critical erudition. My abstracts of each book were made in the French language; my observations often branched into particular essays; and I can still read, without contempt, a dissertation of eight folio pages on eight lines (287–294) of the fourth Georgic of Virgil. M. Deyverdun, my friend, whose name will be fre-

1 *Journal, January* 1756.—I determined to read over the Latin authors in order, and read this year Virgil, Sallust, Livy, Velleius Paterculus, Valerius Maximus, Tacitus, Suetonius, Quintus Curtius, Justin, Florus, Plautus, Terence, and Lucretius. I also read and meditated Locke upon the Understanding.

quently repeated, had joined with equal zeal, though not with equal perseverance, in the same undertaking. To him every thought, every composition, was instantly communicated; with him I enjoyed the benefits of a free conversation on the topics of our common studies.

But it is scarcely possible for a mind endowed with any active curiosity to be long conversant with the Latin classics without aspiring to know the Greek originals whom they celebrate as their masters, and of whom they so warmly recommend the study and imitation.

"Vos exemplaria Græca
Nocturnâ versate manu, versate diurnâ."

It was now that I regretted the early years which had been wasted in sickness or idleness, or mere idle reading; that I condemned the perverse method of our schoolmasters, who, by first teaching the mother language, might descend with so much ease and perspicuity to the origin and etymology of a derivative idiom. In the nineteenth year of my age I determined to supply this defect; and the lessons of Pavilliard again contributed to smooth the entrance of the way, the Greek alphabet, the grammar, and the pronunciation according to the French accent. At my earnest request we presumed to open the Iliad, and I had the pleasure of beholding, though darkly and through a glass, the true image of Homer, whom I had long since admired in an English dress. After my tutor had left me to myself, I worked my way through about half the Iliad, and afterwards interpreted alone a large portion of Xenophon and Herodotus. But my ardour, destitute of aid and emulation, was gradually cooled, and, from the barren task of searching words in a lexicon, I withdrew to the free and familiar conversation of Virgil and Tacitus. Yet in my residence at Lausanne I had laid a solid foundation, which enabled me in a more propitious season to prosecute the study of Grecian literature.

From a blind idea of the usefulness of such abstract science, my father had been desirous, and even pressing, that I should

devote some time to the mathematics;[1] nor could I refuse to comply with so reasonable a wish. During two winters I attended the private lectures of Monsieur de Traytorrens, who explained the elements of algebra and geometry, as far as the Conic Sections of the Marquis de l'Hôpital, and appeared satisfied with my diligence and improvement.[2] But as my childish propensity for

[1] *Extract of a Letter from* M. PAVILLIARD *to* EDWARD GIBBON, Esq.

January 12th, 1757.

MONSIEUR,—Vous avez souhaitté que Monsieur votre fils s'appliquât à l'algebre; le gout qu'il a pour les belles lettres lui faisoit apprehendre que l'algebre ne nuissit à ses études favorites; je lui ai persuadé qu'il ne se faisoit pas une juste idée de cette partie des mathematiques; l'obeissance qu'il vous doit, jointe à mes raisons, l'ont determiné à en faire un cours. Je ne croiois pas qu'avec cette repugnance il y fit de grand progrés: je me suis trompé: il fait bien tout ce qu'il fait; il est exact à ses leçons, il s'applique à lire avant sa leçon, et il repasse avec soin, de maniere qu'il avance beaucoup, et plus que je ne me serois attendu: il est charmé d'avoir commencé, et je pense qu'il fera un petit cours de geometrie, ce que en tout ne lui prendra que sept à huit mois. Pendant qu'il fait ses leçons, il ne s'est point relaché sur ses autres études; il avance beaucoup dans le Grec, et il a presque lu la moieté de l'Iliade d'Homere; je lui fait regulierement des leçons sur cet auteur: il a aussi fini les Historiens Latins; il en est à present aux Poetes; et il a lu entierement Plaute et Terence, et bientôt il aura fini Lucrece. Au reste, il ne lit pas ces auteurs à la legere, il veut s'eclaircir sur tout; de façon, qu'avec le genie qu'il a, l'excellente memoire et l'application, il ira loin dans les sciences.

J'ai eu l'honneur de vous dire ci-devant, que malgré ses études il voioit compagnie; je puis vous le dire encore aujourdhui.

From the Same to the Same.

January 14th, 1758.

MONSIEUR,—J'ai eu l'honneur de vous ecrire le 27 Juillet et le 26 8^{bre} passés, et je vous ai rendu compte de la santé, des études, et de la conduite de Monsieur votre fils. Je n'ai rien à ajouter à tout ce que je vous en ai dit: il se porte parfaitement bien par la grace de Dieu: il continue à etudier avec application, et je puis vous assurer qu'il fait de progrés considerable dans les études, et il se fait extrémement estimer par tous ceux qui le connoissent, et j'espere que quand il vous montrera en detail ce qu'il fait, vous en serez très content. Les Belles Lettres que sont son étude favorite ne l'occupent pas entierement; il continue les mathematiques, et son professeur m'assure qu'il n'a jamais vu personne avancer autant que lui, ni avoir plus d'ardeur et d'application qu'il en a. Son genie heureux et penetrant est secondé par un memoire de plus heureuse, tellement qu'il n'oublie presque rien de ce qu'il apprend. Je n'ai pas moins lieu d'être content de sa conduite; quoiqu'il étude beaucoup, il voit cependant compagnie, mais il ne voit que des personnes dont le commerce peut lui être utile.

[2] *Journal, January* 1757.—I began to study algebra under M. de Traytorrens, went through the elements of algebra and geometry, and the three first books of the Marquis de l'Hôpital's Conic Sections. I also read Tibullus, Catullus, Propertius, Horace (with Dacier's and Torrentius's notes), Virgil, Ovid's Epistles, with Mezi-

numbers and calculations was totally extinct, I was content to receive the passive impression of my professor's lectures without any active exercise of my own powers. As soon as I understood the principles, I relinquished for ever the pursuit of the mathematics; nor can I lament that I desisted before my mind was hardened by the habit of rigid demonstration, so destructive of the finer feelings of moral evidence, which must, however, determine the actions and opinions of our lives. I listened with more pleasure to the proposal of studying the law of nature and nations, which was taught in the academy of Lausanne by M. Vicat, a professor of some learning and reputation. But, instead of attending his public or private course, I preferred in my closet the lessons of his masters and my own reason. Without being disgusted by Grotius or Puffendorf, I studied in their writings the duties of a man, the rights of a citizen, the theory of justice (it is, alas! a theory), and the laws of peace and war, which have had some influence on the practice of modern Europe. My fatigues were alleviated by the good sense of their commentator, Barbeyrac. Locke's "Treatise of Government" instructed me in the knowledge of Whig principles, which ~~are rather founded in~~ reason than experience; but my delight was in the frequent perusal of Montesquieu, whose energy of style and boldness of hypothesis were powerful to awaken and stimulate the genius of the age. The logic of De Crousaz had prepared me to engage with his master Locke, and his antagonist Bayle, of whom the former may be used as a bridle, and the latter applied as a spur, to the curiosity of a young philosopher. According to the nature of their respective works, the schools of argument and objection, I carefully went through the Essay on Human Understanding, and occasionally consulted the most interesting articles of the Philo-

riac's Commentary, the Ars Amandi, and the Elegies; likewise the Augustus and Tiberius of Suetonius, and a Latin translation of Dion Cassius, from the death of Julius Cæsar to the death of Augustus. I also continued my correspondence, begun last year, with M. Allemand of Bex, and the Professor Breitinger of Zurich; and opened a new one with the Professor Gesner of Götttingen.

N.B.—Last year and this I read St. John's Gospel, with part of Xenophon's Cyropædia, the Iliad, and Herodotus; but upon the whole I rather neglected my Greek.

sophic Dictionary. In the infancy of my reason I turned over, as an idle amusement, the most serious and important treatise; in its maturity the most trifling performance could exercise my taste or judgment; and more than once I have been led by a novel into a deep and instructive train of thinking. But I cannot forbear to mention three particular books, since they may have remotely contributed to form the historian of the Roman empire. 1. From the Provincial Letters of Pascal, which almost every year I have perused with new pleasure, I learned to manage the weapon of grave and temperate irony, even on subjects of ecclesiastical solemnity. 2. The Life of Julian, by the Abbé de la Bleterie, first introduced me to the man and the times; and I should be glad to recover my first essay on the truth of the miracle which stopped the rebuilding of the Temple of Jerusalem. 3. In Giannone's Civil History of Naples, I observed with a critical eye the progress and abuse of sacerdotal power, and the revolutions of Italy in the darker ages. This various reading, which I now conducted with discretion, was digested, according to the precept and model of Mr. Locke, into a large commonplace book—a practice, however, which I do not strenuously recommend. The action of the pen will doubtless imprint an idea on the mind as well as on the paper; but I much question whether the benefits of this laborious method are adequate to the waste of time; and I must agree with Dr. Johnson (*Idler*, No. 74), "that what is twice read is commonly better remembered than what is transcribed."

During two years, if I forget some boyish excursions of a day or a week, I was fixed at Lausanne; but at the end of the third summer my father consented that I should make the tour of Switzerland with Pavilliard, and our short absence of one month (September 21—October 20, 1755) was a reward and relaxation of my assiduous studies.[1] The fashion of climbing the mountains

[1] *From* EDWARD GIBBON *to* Mrs. PORTEN.

. . . . . Now for myself. As my father has given me leave to make a journey round Switzerland, we set out to-morrow. Buy a map of Switzerland, it will cost you but a shilling, and follow me. I go by Iverdun, Neufchatel, Bienne or Biel, Solcurre or Solothurn, Bale or

and reviewing the glaciers, had not yet been introduced by foreign travellers, who seek the sublime beauties of nature. But the political face of the country is not less diversified by the forms and spirit of so many various republics, from the jealous government of the few to the licentious freedom of the many. I contemplated with pleasure the new prospects of men and manners, though my conversation with the natives would have been more free and instructive had I possessed the German as well as the French language. We passed through most of the principal towns of Switzerland—Neufchâtel, Bienne, Soleurre, Arau, Baden, Zurich, Basil, and Berne. In every place we visited the churches, arsenals, libraries, and all the most eminent persons; and after my return, I digested my notes in fourteen or fifteen sheets of a French journal, which I despatched to my father, as a proof that my time and his money had not been misspent. Had I found this journal among his papers, I might be tempted to select some passages; but I will not transcribe the printed accounts, and it

Basil, Baden, Zurich, Lucerne, and Berne. The voyage will be of about four weeks, so that I hope to find a letter from you waiting for me. As my father had given me leave to learn what I had a mind, I have learned to ride, and learn actually to dance and draw. Besides that, I often give ten or twelve hours a day to my studies. I find a great many agreeable people here, see them sometimes, and can say upon the whole, without vanity, that though I am the Englishman here who spends the least money, I am he who is the most generally liked. I told you that my father had promised to send me into France and Italy. I have thanked him for it; but if he would follow my plan he won't do it yet awhile. I never liked young travellers; they go too raw to make any great remarks, and they lose a time which is (in my opinion) the most precious part of a man's life. My scheme would be to spend this winter at Lausanne; for though it is a very good place to acquire the air of good company and the French tongue, we have no good professors. To spend (I say) the winter at Lausanne, go into England to see my friends a couple of months, and after that finish my studies either at Cambridge (for after what has passed one cannot think of Oxford), or at an university in Holland. If you liked the scheme could you not propose it to my father by Metcalf, or somebody who has a certain credit over him? I forgot to ask you whether, in case my father writes to tell me of his marriage, would you advise me to compliment my mother-in-law? I think so. My health is so very regular that I have nothing to say about it.

I have been the whole day writing you this letter; the preparations for our voyage gave me a thousand interruptions. Besides that, I was obliged to write in English. This last reason will seem a paradox, but I assure you the French is much more familiar to me.—I am, &c., E. GIBBON.

LAUSANNE, *Sept.* 20, 1755.

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may be sufficient to notice a remarkable spot which left a deep and lasting impression on my memory. From Zurich we proceeded to the Benedictine Abbey of Einsiedlen, more commonly styled Our Lady of the Hermits. I was astonished by the profuse ostentation of riches in the poorest corner of Europe; amidst a savage scene of woods and mountains, a palace appears to have been erected by magic; and it was erected by the potent magic of religion. A crowd of palmers and votaries was prostrate before the altar. The title and worship of the Mother of God provoked my indignation; and the lively naked image of superstition suggested to me, as in the same place it had done to Zuinglius, the most pressing argument for the reformation of the Church. About two years after this tour, I passed at Geneva a useful and agreeable month; but this excursion, and some short visits in the Pays de Vaud, did not materially interrupt my studious and sedentary life at Lausanne.

My thirst of improvement and the languid state of science at Lausanne, soon prompted me to solicit a literary correspondence with several men of learning, whom I had not an opportunity of personally consulting. 1. In the perusal of Livy (xxx. 44), I had been stopped by a sentence in a speech of Hannibal, which cannot be reconciled by any torture with his character or argument. The commentators dissemble or confess their perplexity. It occurred to me that the change of a single letter, by substituting *otio* instead of *odio*, might restore a clear and consistent sense; but I wished to weigh my emendation in scales less partial than my own. I addressed myself to M. Crevier, the successor of Rollin, and a professor in the university of Paris, who had published a large and valuable edition of Livy. His answer was speedy and polite; he praised my ingenuity, and adopted my conjecture. 2. I maintained a Latin correspondence, at first anonymous, and afterwards in my own name, with Professor Breitinger of Zurich, the learned editor of a Septuagint Bible. In our frequent letters we discussed many questions of antiquity, many passages of the Latin classics. I proposed my interpretations and amendments. His censures, for he did not spare my

boldness of conjecture, were sharp and strong; and I was encouraged by the consciousness of my strength when I could stand in free debate against a critic of such eminence and erudition. 3. I corresponded on similar topics with the celebrated Professor Matthew Gesner, of the University of Göttingen; and he accepted, as courteously as the two former, the invitation of an unknown youth. But his abilities might possibly be decayed; his elaborate letters were feeble and prolix; and when I asked his proper direction, the vain old man covered half a sheet of paper with the foolish enumeration of his titles and offices. 4. These professors of Paris, Zurich, and Göttingen were strangers, whom I presumed to address on the credit of their name; but M. Allamand, Minister at Bex, was my personal friend, with whom I maintained a more free and interesting correspondence. He was a master of language, of science, and, above all, of dispute; and his acute and flexible logic could support, with equal address, and perhaps with equal indifference, the adverse sides of every possible question. His spirit was active, but his pen had been indolent. M. Allamand had exposed himself to much scandal and reproach by an anonymous letter (1745) to the Protestants of France, in which he labours to persuade them that public worship is the exclusive right and duty of the State, and that their numerous assemblies of dissenters and rebels were not authorised by the law or the gospel. His style is animated, his arguments specious; and if the papist may seem to lurk under the mask of a protestant, the philosopher is concealed under the disguise of a papist.

After some trials in France and Holland, which were defeated by his fortune or his character, a genius that might have enlightened or deluded the world, was buried in a country living, unknown to fame, and discontented with mankind. *Est sacrificulus in pago, et rusticos decipit.* As often as private or ecclesiastical business called him to Lausanne, I enjoyed the pleasure and benefit of his conversation, and we were mutually flattered by our attention to each other. Our correspondence, in his absence, chiefly turned on Locke's metaphysics, which he attacked,

and I defended; the origin of ideas, the principles of evidence, and the doctrine of liberty—

"And found no end, in wandering mazes lost."

By fencing with so skilful a master, I acquired some dexterity in the use of my philosophic weapons; but I was still the slave of education and prejudice. He had some measures to keep; and I much suspect that he never showed me the true colours of his secret scepticism.

Before I was recalled from Switzerland, I had the satisfaction of seeing the most extraordinary man of the age; a poet, an historian, a philosopher, who has filled thirty quartos, of prose and verse, with his various productions, often excellent, and always entertaining. Need I add the name of Voltaire? After forfeiting, by his own misconduct, the friendship of the first of kings, he retired at the age of sixty, with a plentiful fortune, to a free and beautiful country, and resided two winters (1757 and 1758) in the town or neighbourhood of Lausanne. My desire of beholding Voltaire, whom I then rated above his real magnitude, was easily gratified. He received me with civility as an English youth, but I cannot boast of any peculiar notice or distinction, *Virgilium vidi tantum.*

The ode which he composed on his first arrival on the banks of the Leman Lake, *O Maison d'Aristippe! O Jardin d'Epicure*, &c., had been imparted as a secret to the gentleman by whom I was introduced. He allowed me to read it twice; I knew it by heart; and as my discretion was not equal to my memory, the author was soon displeased by the circulation of a copy. In writing this trivial anecdote, I wished to observe whether my memory was impaired, and I have the comfort of finding that every line of the poem is still engraved in fresh and indelible characters. The highest gratification which I derived from Voltaire's residence at Lausanne was the uncommon circumstance of hearing a great poet declaim his own productions on the stage. He had formed a company of gentlemen and ladies, some of whom were not destitute of talents. A decent

theatre was framed at Monrepos, a country house at the end of a suburb; dresses and scenes were provided at the expense of the actors; and the author directed the rehearsals with the zeal and attention of paternal love. In two successive winters his tragedies of Zayre, Alzire, Zulime, and his sentimental comedy of the Enfant Prodigue, were played at the theatre of Monrepos. Voltaire represented the characters best adapted to his years, Lusignan, Alvarez, Benassar, Euphemon. His declamation was fashioned to the pomp and cadence of the old stage; and he expressed the enthusiasm of poetry rather than the feelings of nature. My ardour, which soon became conspicuous, seldom failed of procuring me a ticket. The habits of pleasure fortified my taste for the French theatre, and that taste has perhaps abated my idolatry for the gigantic genius of Shakespeare, which is inculcated from our infancy as the first duty of an Englishman. The wit and philosophy of Voltaire, his table and theatre, refined, in a visible degree, the manners of Lausanne; and, however addicted to study, I enjoyed my share of the amusements of society. After the representation of Monrepos I sometimes supped with the actors. I was now familiar in some, and acquainted in many houses; and my evenings were generally devoted to cards and conversation, either in private parties or numerous assemblies.

I hesitate, from the apprehension of ridicule, when I approach the delicate subject of my early love. By this word I do not mean the polite attention, the gallantry, without hope or design, which has originated in the spirit of chivalry, and is interwoven with the texture of French manners. I understand by this passion the union of desire, friendship, and tenderness, which is inflamed by a single female, which prefers her to the rest of her sex, and which seeks her possession as the supreme or the sole happiness of our being. I need not blush at recollecting the object of my choice; and though my love was disappointed of success, I am rather proud that I was once capable of feeling such a pure and exalted sentiment. The personal attractions of Mademoiselle Susan Curchod were embellished by the virtues

and talents of the mind. Her fortune was humble, but her family was respectable. Her mother, a native of France, had preferred her religion to her country. The profession of her father did not extinguish the moderation and philosophy of his temper, and he lived content with a small salary and laborious duty in the obscure lot of minister of Crassy, in the mountains that separate the Pays de Vaud from the county of Burgundy.[1] In the solitude of a sequestered village he bestowed a liberal, and even learned, education on his only daughter. She surpassed his hopes by her proficiency in the sciences and languages; and in her short visits to some relations at Lausanne, the wit, the beauty, and erudition of Mademoiselle Curchod were the theme of universal applause. The report of such a prodigy awakened my curiosity; I saw and loved. I found her learned without pedantry, lively in conversation, pure in sentiment, and elegant in manners; and the first sudden emotion was fortified by the habits and knowledge of a more familiar acquaintance. She permitted me to make her two or three visits at her father's house. I passed some happy days there, in the mountains of Burgundy, and her parents honourably encouraged the connection. In a calm retirement the gay vanity of youth no longer fluttered in her bosom; she listened to the voice of truth and passion, and I might presume to hope that I had made some impression on a virtuous

[1] *Extracts from the Journal.*

March 1757.—I wrote some critical observations upon Plautus.

March 8*th.*—I wrote a long dissertation on some lines of Virgil.

June.—I saw Mademoiselle Curchod—*Omnia vincit amor, et nos cedamus amori.*

August.—I went to Crassy, and stayed two days.

Sept. 15*th.*—I went to Geneva.

Oct. 15*th.*—I came back to Lausanne, having passed through Crassy.

Nov. 1*st.*—I went to visit M. de Watteville at Loin, and saw Mademoiselle Curchod in my way through Rolle.

Nov. 17*th.*—I went to Crassy and stayed there six days.

Jan. 1758.—In the three first months of this year I read Ovid's Metamorphoses, finished the Conic Sections with M. de Traytorrens, and went as far as the infinite series; I likewise read Sir Isaac Newton's Chronology, and wrote my critical observations upon it.

Jan. 23*rd.*—I saw Alzire acted by the society at Monrepos. Voltaire acted Alvares; D'Hermanches, Zamore; De St. Cierge, Gusman; M. de Gentil, Monteze; and Madame Denys, Alzire.

heart. At Crassy and Lausanne I indulged my dream of felicity, but on my return to England I soon discovered that my father would not hear of this strange alliance, and that without his consent I was myself destitute and helpless. After a painful struggle I yielded to my fate: I sighed as a lover, I obeyed as a son;[1] my wound was insensibly healed by time, absence, and the habits of a new life. My cure was accelerated by a faithful report of the tranquillity and cheerfulness of the lady herself, and my love subsided in friendship and esteem. The minister of Crassy soon afterwards died; his stipend died with him. His daughter retired to Geneva, where, by teaching young ladies, she earned a hard subsistence for herself and her mother; but in her lowest distress she maintained a spotless reputation and a dignified behaviour. A rich banker of Paris, a citizen of Geneva, had the good fortune and good sense to discover and possess this inestimable treasure; and in the capital of taste and luxury she resisted the temptations of wealth as she had sustained the hardships of indigence. The genius of her husband has exalted him to the most conspicuous station in Europe. In every change of prosperity and disgrace he has reclined on the bosom of a faithful friend; and Mademoiselle Curchod is now the wife of M. Necker, the minister, and perhaps the legislator, of the French monarchy.

Whatsoever have been the fruits of my education, they must be ascribed to the fortunate banishment which placed me at Lausanne. I have sometimes applied to my own fate the verses of Pindar, which remind an Olympic champion that his victory was the consequence of his exile, and that at home, like a domestic fowl, his days might have rolled away inactive or inglorious.

. . . ἤτοι καὶ τιά κεν,
Ἐνδιμάχας ἄτ' ἀλίκτως,
Συγγόνων παρ' ἑστία
Ἀκλεὴς τιμὰ κατεφυλλορόησε ποδῶν·

[1] See "Oeuvres de Rousseau," tom. xxiii. p. 88, 89, octavo edition. As an author I shall not appeal from the judgment, or taste, or caprice, of Jean Jaques; but that extraordinary man, whom I admire and pity, should have been less precipitate in condemning the moral character and conduct of a stranger.

Εἰ μὴ στάσις ἀντιάνιρα
Κνωσίας ἄμιρεσι πάτρας.[1]—OLYMP. xii.

If my childish revolt against the religion of my country had not stripped me in time of my academic gown, the five important years, so liberally improved in the studies and conversation of Lausanne, would have been steeped in port and prejudice among the monks of Oxford. Had the fatigue of idleness compelled me to read, the path of learning would not have been enlightened by a ray of philosophic freedom. I should have grown to manhood ignorant of the life and language of Europe, and my knowledge of the world would have been confined to an English cloister. But my religious error fixed me at Lausanne in a state of banishment and disgrace. The rigid course of discipline and abstinence to which I was condemned invigorated the constitution of my mind and body; poverty and pride estranged me from my countrymen. One mischief, however, and in their eyes a serious and irreparable mischief, was derived from the success of my Swiss education: I had ceased to be an Englishman. At the flexible period of youth, from the age of sixteen to twenty-one, my opinions, habits, and sentiments were cast in a foreign mould; the faint and distant remembrance of England was almost obliterated; my native language was grown less familiar; and I should have cheerfully accepted the offer of a moderate independence on the terms of perpetual exile. By the good sense and temper of Pavilliard my yoke was insensibly lightened. He left me master of my time and actions, but he could neither change my situation nor increase my allowance, and with the progress of my years and reason I impatiently sighed for the moment of my deliverance. At length, in the spring of the year 1758, my father signified his

[1] Thus, like the crested bird of Mars, at home
Engaged in foul domestic jars,
And wasted with intestine wars,
Inglorious hadst thou spent thy vig'rous bloom;
Had not sedition's civil broils
Expelled thee from thy native Crete,
And driv'n thee with more glorious toils
Th' Olympic crown in Pisa's plain to meet.
—WEST'S PINDAR.

permission and his pleasure that I should immediately return home. We were then in the midst of a war; the resentment of the French at our taking their ships without a declaration had rendered that polite nation somewhat peevish and difficult. They denied a passage to English travellers, and the road through Germany was circuitous, toilsome, and perhaps in the neighbourhood of the armies exposed to some danger. In this perplexity, two Swiss officers of my acquaintance in the Dutch service, who were returning to their garrisons, offered to conduct me through France as one of their companions; nor did we sufficiently reflect that my borrowed name and regimentals might have been considered, in case of a discovery, in a very serious light. I took my leave of Lausanne on the 11th of April 1758, with a mixture of joy and regret, in the firm resolution of revisiting as a man the persons and places which had been so dear to my youth. We travelled slowly, but pleasantly, in a hired coach, over the hills of Franche-comté and the fertile province of Lorraine, and passed, without accident or inquiry, through several fortified towns of the French frontier; from thence we entered the wild Ardennes of the Austrian duchy of Luxemburg; and after crossing the Meuse at Liege, we traversed the heaths of Brabant, and reached, on the fifteenth day, our Dutch garrison of Bois le Duc. In our passage through Nancy, my eye was gratified by the aspect of a regular and beautiful city, the work of Stanislaus, who, after the storms of Polish royalty, reposed in the love and gratitude of his new subjects of Lorraine. In our halt at Maestricht I visited M. de Beaufort, a learned critic, who was known to me by his specious arguments against the five first centuries of the Roman History. After dropping my regimental companions, I stepped aside to visit Rotterdam and the Hague. I wished to have observed a country, the monument of freedom and industry; but my days were numbered, and a longer delay would have been ungraceful. I hastened to embark at the Brill, landed the next day at Harwich, and proceeded to London, where my father awaited my arrival. The whole term of my first absence from England was four years ten months and fifteen days.

In the prayers of the Church our personal concerns are judiciously reduced to the threefold distinction of mind, body, and estate. The sentiments of the mind excite and exercise our social sympathy. The review of my moral and literary character is the most interesting to myself and to the public; and I may expatiate without reproach on my private studies, since they have produced the public writings which can alone entitle me to the esteem and friendship of my readers. The experience of the world inculcates a discreet reserve on the subject of our person and estate, and we soon learn that a free disclosure of our riches or poverty would provoke the malice of envy or encourage the insolence of contempt.

The only person in England whom I was impatient to see was my Aunt Porten, the affectionate guardian of my tender years. I hastened to her house in College Street, Westminster, and the evening was spent in the effusions of joy and confidence. It was not without some awe and apprehension that I approached the presence of my father. My infancy, to speak the truth, had been neglected at home; the severity of his look and language at our last parting still dwelt on my memory, nor could I form any notion of his character, or my probable reception. They were both more agreeable than I could expect. The domestic discipline of our ancestors has been relaxed by the philosophy and softness of the age; and if my father remembered that he had trembled before a stern parent, it was only to adopt with his own son an opposite mode of behaviour. He received me as a man and a friend; all constraint was banished at our first interview, and we ever afterwards continued on the same terms of easy and equal politeness. He applauded the success of my education; every word and action was expressive of the most cordial affection, and our lives would have passed without a cloud if his economy had been equal to his fortune, or if his fortune had been equal to his desires. During my absence he had married his second wife, Miss Dorothea Patton, who was introduced to me with the most unfavourable prejudice. I considered his second marriage as an act of displeasure, and I was disposed to hate the rival of

my mother. But the injustice was in my own fancy, and the imaginary monster was an amiable and deserving woman. I could not be mistaken in the first view of her understanding, her knowledge, and the elegant spirit of her conversation: her polite welcome, and her assiduous care to study and gratify my wishes, announced at least that the surface would be smooth; and my suspicions of art and falsehood were gradually dispelled by the full discovery of her warm and exquisite sensibility. After some reserve on my side, our minds associated in confidence and friendship; and as Mrs. Gibbon had neither children nor the hopes of children, we more easily adopted the tender names and genuine characters of mother and of son. By the indulgence of these parents, I was left at liberty to consult my taste or reason in the choice of place, of company, and of amusements, and my excursions were bounded only by the limits of the island and the measure of my income. Some faint efforts were made to procure me the employment of secretary to a foreign embassy, and I listened to a scheme which would again have transported me to the Continent. Mrs. Gibbon, with seeming wisdom, exhorted me to take chambers in the Temple, and devote my leisure to the study of the law. I cannot repent of having neglected her advice. (Few men without the spur of necessity have resolution to force their way through the thorns and thickets of that gloomy labyrinth.) Nature had not endowed me with the bold and ready eloquence which makes itself heard amidst the tumult of the bar, and I should probably have been diverted from the labours of literature without acquiring the fame or fortune of a successful pleader. I had no need to call to my aid the regular duties of a profession; every day, every hour, was agreeably filled, nor have I known, like so many of my country-men, the tediousness of an idle life.

Of the two years (May 1758—~~May 1760~~) between my return to England and the embodying of the Hampshire militia, I passed about nine months in London, and the remainder in the country. The metropolis affords many amusements, which are open to all. It is itself an astonishing and perpetual spectacle to the curious

eye; and each taste, each sense, may be gratified by the variety of objects which will occur in the long circuit of a morning walk. I assiduously frequented the theatres at a very propitious era of the stage, when a constellation of excellent actors, both in tragedy and comedy, was eclipsed by the meridian brightness of Garrick in the maturity of his judgment and vigour of his performance. The pleasures of a town life are within the reach of every man who is regardless of his health, his money, and his company. By the contagion of example I was sometimes seduced; but the better habits which I had formed at Lausanne induced me to seek a more elegant and rational society; and if my search was less easy and successful than I might have hoped, I shall at present impute the failure to the disadvantages of my situation and character. Had the rank and fortune of my parents given them an annual establishment in London, their own house would have introduced me to a numerous and polite circle of acquaintance. But my father's taste had always preferred the highest and the lowest company, for which he was equally qualified; and after a twelve years' retirement he was no longer in the memory of the great with whom he had associated. I found myself a stranger in the midst of a vast and unknown city, and at my entrance into life I was reduced to some dull family parties and some scattered connections, which were not such as I should have chosen for myself. The most useful friends of my father were the Mallets; they received me with civility and kindness at first on his account, and afterwards on my own, and (if I may use Lord Chesterfield's words) I was soon domesticated in their house. Mr. Mallet, a name among the English poets, is praised by an unforgiving enemy for the ease and elegance of his conversation, and his wife was not destitute of wit or learning. By his assistance I was introduced to Lady Hervey, the mother of the present Earl of Bristol. Her age and infirmities confined her at home; her dinners were select; in the evening her house was open to the best company of both sexes and all nations; nor was I displeased at her preference and affectation of the manners, the language, and the literature of France. But my progress in the English

world was in general left to my own efforts, and those efforts were languid and slow. I had not been endowed by art or nature with those happy gifts of confidence and address which unlock every door and every bosom; nor would it be reasonable to complain of the just consequences of my sickly childhood, foreign education, and reserved temper. While coaches were rattling through Bond Street, I have passed many a solitary evening in my lodging with my books. My studies were sometimes interrupted by a sigh, which I breathed towards Lausanne; and on the approach of spring, I withdrew without reluctance from the noisy and extensive scene of crowds without company, and dissipation without pleasure. In each of the twenty-five years of my acquaintance with London (1758–1783) the prospect gradually brightened, and this unfavourable picture most properly belongs to the first period after my return from Switzerland.

My father's residence in Hampshire, where I have passed many light, and some heavy hours, was at Buriton, near Petersfield, one mile from the Portsmouth road, and at the easy distance of fifty-eight miles from London.[1] An old mansion, in a state of decay, had been converted into the fashion and convenience of a modern house, and if strangers had nothing to see, the inhabitants had little to desire. The spot was not happily chosen, at the end of the village and the bottom of the hill, but the aspect of the adjacent grounds was various and cheerful. The downs commanded a noble prospect, and the long hanging woods in sight of the house could not perhaps have been improved by art or expense. My father kept in his own hands the whole of the estate, and even rented some additional land; and whatsoever might be the balance of profit and loss, the farm supplied him with amusement and plenty. The produce maintained a number of men and horses, which were multiplied by the intermixture of domestic and rural servants; and in the intervals of labour the favourite team, a handsome set of bays or greys, was harnessed to the coach. The economy of the house was regulated by the taste and prudence of

[1] The estate and manor of Beriton, otherwise Buriton, were considerable, and were sold a few years ago to Lord Stawell.—S.

Mrs. Gibbon. She prided herself in the elegance of her occasional dinners; and from the uncleanly avarice of Madame Pavilliard I was suddenly transported to the daily neatness and luxury of an English table. Our immediate neighbourhood was rare and rustic; but from the verge of our hills, as far as Chichester and Goodwood, the western district of Sussex was interspersed with noble seats and hospitable families with whom we cultivated a friendly, and might have enjoyed a very frequent intercourse. As my stay at Buriton was always voluntary, I was received and dismissed with smiles; but the comforts of my retirement did not depend on the ordinary pleasures of the country. My father could never inspire me with his love and knowledge of farming. I never handled a gun, I seldom mounted an horse; and my philosophic walks were soon terminated by a shady bench, where I was long detained by the sedentary amusement of reading or meditation. At home I occupied a pleasant and spacious apartment; the library on the same floor was soon considered as my peculiar domain; and I might say with truth that I was never less alone than when by myself. My sole complaint, which I piously suppressed, arose from the kind restraint imposed on the freedom of my time. By the habit of early rising I always secured a sacred portion of the day, and many scattered moments were stolen and employed by my studious industry. But the family hours of breakfast, of dinner, of tea, and of supper were regular and long. After breakfast Mrs. Gibbon expected my company in her dressing-room; after tea my father claimed my conversation and the perusal of the newspapers; and in the midst of an interesting work I was often called down to receive the visit of some idle neighbours. Their dinners and visits required in due season a similar return; and I dreaded the period of the full moon, which was usually reserved for our more distant excursions. I could not refuse attending my father, in the summer of 1759, to the races at Stockbridge, Reading, and Odiam, where he had entered a horse for the hunter's plate; and I was not displeased with the sight of our Olympic games, the beauty of the spot, the fleetness of the horses, and the gay tumult of the numerous spectators. As soon

as the militia business was agitated, many days were tediously consumed in meetings of deputy-lieutenants at Petersfield, Alton, and Winchester. In the close of the same year, 1759, Sir Simeon (then Mr.) Stewart attempted an unsuccessful contest for the county of Southampton against Mr. Legge, Chancellor of the Exchequer—a well-known contest, in which Lord Bute's influence was first exerted and censured. Our canvass at Portsmouth and Gosport lasted several days; but the interruption of my studies was compensated in some degree by the spectacle of English manners and the acquisition of some practical knowledge.

If in a more domestic or more dissipated scene my application was somewhat relaxed, the love of knowledge was inflamed and gratified by the command of books, and I compared the poverty of Lausanne with the plenty of London. My father's study at Buriton was stuffed with much trash of the last age, with much High Church divinity and politics, which have long since gone to their proper place, yet it contained some valuable editions of the classics and the Fathers, the choice, as it should seem, of Mr. Law, and many English publications of the times had been occasionally added. From this slender beginning I have gradually formed a numerous and select library, the foundation of my works, and the best comfort of my life both at home and abroad. On the receipt of the first quarter a large share of my allowance was appropriated to my literary wants. I cannot forget the joy with which I exchanged a bank-note of twenty pounds for the twenty volumes of the "Memoirs of the Academy of Inscriptions," nor would it have been easy, by any other expenditure of the same sum, to have procured so large and lasting a fund of rational amusement. At a time when I most assiduously frequented this school of ancient literature, I thus expressed my opinion of a learned and various collection, which since the year 1759 has been doubled in magnitude though not in merit:—"Une de ces societés, qui ont mieux immortalisé Louis XIV. qu'un ambition souvent pernicieuse aux hommes, commençoit deja ces recherches qui réunissent la justesse de l'esprit, l'ameneté & l'erudition: où l'on voit tant des decouvertes, et quelquefois, ce qui ne cede qu'à

peine aux decouvertes, une ignorance modeste et savante." The review of my library must be reserved for the period of its maturity; but in this place I may allow myself to observe that I am not conscious of having ever bought a book from a motive of ostentation; that every volume, before it was deposited on the shelf, was either read or sufficiently examined; and that I soon adopted the tolerating maxim of the elder Pliny, "Nullum esse librum tam malum ut non ex aliquâ parte prodesset." I could not yet find leisure or courage to renew the pursuit of the Greek language, excepting by reading the lessons of the Old and New Testament every Sunday when I attended the family to church. The series of my Latin authors was less strenuously completed; but the acquisition, by inheritance or purchase, of the best editions of Cicero, Quintilian, Livy, Tacitus, Ovid, &c., afforded a fair prospect which I seldom neglected. I persevered in the useful method of abstracts and observations, and a single example may suffice of a note which had almost swelled into a work. The solution of a passage of Livy (xxxviii. 38) involved me in the dry and dark treatises of Greaves, Arbuthnot, Hooper, Bernard, Eisenschmidt, Gronovius, La Barré, Freret, &c.; and in my French essay (chap. xx.) I ridiculously send the reader to my own manuscript remarks on the weights, coins, and measures of the ancients, which were abruptly terminated by the militia drum.

As I am now entering on a more ample field of society and study, I can only hope to avoid a vain and prolix garrulity, by overlooking the vulgar crowd of my acquaintance, and confining myself to such intimate friends among books and men as are best entitled to my notice by their own merit and reputation, or by the deep impression which they have left on my mind. Yet I will embrace this occasion of recommending to the young student a practice which about this time I myself adopted. After glancing my eye over the design and order of a new book, I suspended the perusal till I had finished the task of self-examination, till I had revolved, in a solitary walk, all that I knew or believed or had thought on the subject of the whole work, or of some particular chapter: I was then qualified to discern how much the

author added to my original stock; and I was sometimes satisfied by the agreement, I was sometimes armed by the opposition of our ideas. The favourite companions of my leisure were our English writers since the Revolution; they breathe the spirit of reason and liberty, and they most seasonably contributed to restore the purity of my own language, which had been corrupted by the long use of a foreign idiom. By the judicious advice of Mr. Mallet I was directed to the writings of Swift and Addison. Wit and simplicity are their common attributes; but the style of Swift is supported by manly original vigour; that of Addison is adorned by the female graces of elegance and mildness. The old reproach, that no British altars had been raised to the Muse of History, was recently disproved by the first performances of Robertson and Hume, the histories of Scotland and of the Stuarts. I will assume the presumption of saying that I was not unworthy to read them; nor will I disguise my different feelings in the repeated perusals. The perfect composition, the nervous language, the well-turned periods of Dr. Robertson inflamed me to the ambitious hope that I might one day tread in his footsteps; the calm philosophy, the careless inimitable beauties of his friend and rival, often forced me to close the volume with a mixed sensation of delight and despair.

The design of my first work, the Essay on the Study of Literature, was suggested by a refinement of vanity, the desire of justifying and praising the object of a favourite pursuit. In France, to which my ideas were confined, the learning and language of Greece and Rome were neglected by a philosophic age. The guardian of those studies, the Academy of Inscriptions, was degraded to the lowest rank among the three royal societies of Paris. The new appellation of Erudits was contemptuously applied to the successors of Lipsius and Casaubon; and I was provoked to hear (see M. d'Alembert Discours Préliminaire à l'Encyclopédie) that the exercise of the memory, their sole merit, had been superseded by the nobler faculties of the imagination and the judgment. I was ambitious of proving by my own example, as well as by my precepts, that all the faculties of the mind

may be exercised and displayed by the study of ancient literature. I began to select and adorn the various proofs and illustrations which had offered themselves in reading the classics, and the first pages or chapters of my Essay were composed before my departure from Lausanne. The hurry of the journey, and of the first weeks of my English life, suspended all thoughts of serious application. But my object was ever before my eyes, and no more than ten days, from the first to the eleventh of July, were suffered to elapse after my summer establishment at Buriton. My essay was finished in about six weeks; and as soon as a fair copy had been transcribed by one of the French prisoners at Petersfield, I looked round for a critic and judge of my first performance. A writer can seldom be content with the doubtful recompense of solitary approbation; but a youth ignorant of the world, and of himself, must desire to weigh his talents in some scales less partial than his own. My conduct was natural, my motive laudable, my choice of Dr. Maty judicious and fortunate. By descent and education Dr. Maty, though born in Holland, might be considered as a Frenchman; but he was fixed in London by the practice of physic, and an office in the British Museum. His reputation was justly founded on the eighteen volumes of the *Journal Britannique*, which he had supported, almost alone, with perseverance and success. This humble though useful labour, which had once been dignified by the genius of Bayle and the learning of Le Clerc, was not disgraced by the taste, the knowledge, and the judgment of Maty. He exhibits a candid and pleasing view of the state of literature in England during a period of six years (January 1750—December 1755); and, far different from his angry son, he handles the rod of criticism with the tenderness and reluctance of a parent. The author of the *Journal Britannique* sometimes aspires to the character of a poet and philosopher. His style is pure and elegant; and in his virtues, or even in his defects, he may be ranked as one of the last disciples of the school of Fontenelle. His answer to my first letter was prompt and polite. After a careful examination he returned [redacted]script, with some animadversion and much applause;

and when I visited London in the ensuing winter, we discussed the design and execution in several free and familiar conversations. In a short excursion to Buriton I reviewed my Essay, according to his friendly advice; and after suppressing a third, adding a third, and altering a third, I consummated my first labour by a short preface, which is dated February 3rd, 1759. Yet I still shrunk from the press with the terrors of virgin modesty: the manuscript was safely deposited in my desk; and as my attention was engaged by new objects, the delay might have been prolonged till I had fulfilled the precept of Horace, "Nonumque prematur in annum." Father Sirmond, a learned Jesuit, was still more rigid, since he advised a young friend to expect the mature age of fifty before he gave himself or his writings to the public (Olivet, Histoire de l'Académie Françoise, tom. ii. p. 143). The counsel was singular, but it is still more singular that it should have been approved by the example of the author. Sirmond was himself fifty-five years of age when he published (in 1614) his first work, an edition of Sidonius Apollinaris, with many valuable annotations (see his Life, before the great edition of his works in five volumes folio, Paris, 1696, e Typographiâ Regiâ).

Two years elapsed in silence, but in the spring of 1761 I yielded to the authority of a parent, and complied, like a pious son, with the wish of my own heart.[1] My private resolves were influenced by the state of Europe. About this time the belligerent powers had made and accepted overtures of peace; our English plenipotentiaries were named to assist at the Congress of Augsbourg, which never met: I wished to attend them as a gentleman or a secretary; and my father fondly believed that the proof of some literary talents might introduce me to public notice, and second

[1] *Journal, March 8th*, 1758.—I began my Essai sur l'Étude de la Litterature, and wrote the twenty-three first chapters (excepting the following ones, 11, 12, 13, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22) before I left Switzerland.

July 11th.—I again took in hand my Essay; and in about six weeks finished it, from chap. 23–55 (excepting 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, and note to chap. 38), besides a number of chapters from chap. 55 to the end, which are now struck out.

Feb. 11th, 1759.—I wrote the chapters of my Essay, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, the note to chap. 38; and the first part of the preface.

April 23rd, 1761.—Being at length, by my father's advice, determined to publish

the recommendations of my friends. After a last revisal I consulted Mr. Mallet and Dr. Maty, who approved the design and promoted the execution. Mr. Mallet, after hearing me read my manuscript, received it from my hands, and delivered it into those of Becket, with whom he made an agreement in my name—an easy agreement: I required only a certain number of copies; and, without transferring my property, I devolved on the bookseller the charges and profits of the edition. Dr. Maty undertook, in my absence, to correct the sheets. He inserted, without my knowledge, an elegant and flattering epistle to the author, which is composed, however, with so much art, that, in case of a defeat, his favourable report might have been ascribed to the indulgence of a friend for the rash attempt of a young English gentleman. The work was printed and published under the title of Essai sur l'Étude de la Litterature, à Londres, chez T. Becket et P. A. de Hondt, 1761, in a small volume in duodecimo. My dedication to my father, a proper and pious address, was composed the 28th of May; Dr. Maty's letter is dated the 16th of June; and I received the first copy (June 23rd) at Alresford, two days before I marched with the Hampshire militia. Some weeks afterwards, on the same ground, I presented my book to the late Duke of York, who breakfasted in Colonel Pitt's tent. By my father's direction, and Mallet's advice, many literary gifts were distributed to several eminent characters in England and France. Two books were sent to the Count de Caylus and the Duchesse d'Aiguillon at Paris; I had reserved twenty copies for my friends at Lausanne, as the first fruits of my education, and a grateful token of my remembrance; and on all these persons I levied an unavoidable

my Essay, I revised it with great care, made many alterations, struck out a considerable part, and wrote the chapters from 57 to 78, which I was obliged myself to copy out fair.

June 10th, 1761.—Finding the printing of my book proceeded but slowly, I went up to town, where I found the whole was finished. I gave Becket orders for the presents: twenty for Lausanne; copies for the Duke of Richmond, Marquis of Carnarvon, Lords Waldegrave, Lichfield, Bath, Granville, Bute, Shelbourn, Chesterfield, Hardwicke, Lady Hervey, Sir Joseph Yorke, Sir Matthew Featherstone, MM. Mallet, Maty, Scott, Wray, Lord Egremont, M. de Bussy, Mademoiselle la Duchesse d'Aiguillon, and M. le Comte de Caylus. Great part of these were only my father's or Mallet's acquaintance.

tax of civility and compliment. It is not surprising that a work, of which the style and sentiments were so totally foreign, should have been more successful abroad than at home. I was delighted by the copious extracts, the warm commendations, and the flattering predictions of the journals of France and Holland; and the next year (1762) a new edition (I believe at Geneva) extended the fame, or at least the circulation of the work. In England it was received with cold indifference, little read, and speedily forgotten. A small impression was slowly dispersed; the bookseller murmured, and the author (had his feelings been more exquisite) might have wept over the blunders and baldness of the English translation. The publication of my History fifteen years afterwards revived the memory of my first performance, and the Essay was eagerly sought in the shops. But I refused the permission which Becket solicited of reprinting it: the public curiosity was imperfectly satisfied by a pirated copy of the booksellers of Dublin; and when a copy of the original edition has been discovered in a sale, the primitive value of half-a-crown has risen to the fanciful price of a guinea or thirty shillings.

I have expatiated on the petty circumstances and period of my first publication, a memorable era in the life of a student, when he ventures to reveal the measure of his mind. His hopes and fears are multiplied by the idea of self-importance, and he believes for a while that the eyes of mankind are fixed on his person and performance. Whatever may be my present reputation, it no longer rests on the merit of this first Essay; and at the end of twenty-eight years I may appreciate my juvenile work with the impartiality, and almost with the indifference, of a stranger. In his answer to Lady Hervey, the Count de Caylus admires, or affects to admire, "Les livres sans nombre que Mr. Gibbon a lus et tres bien lus." But, alas! my stock of erudition at that time was scanty and superficial; and if I allow myself the liberty of naming the Greek masters, my genuine and personal acquaintance was confined to the Latin classics. The most serious defect of my Essay is a kind of obscurity and abruptness which always fatigues, and may often elude, the attention of the reader. In-

stead of a precise and proper definition of the title itself, the sense of the word literature is loosely and variously applied: a number of remarks and examples, historical, critical, philosophical, are heaped on each other without method or connection; and if we except some introductory pages, all the remaining chapters might indifferently be reversed or transposed. The obscurity of many passages is often affected, *brevis esse laboro, obscurus fio;* the desire of expressing perhaps a common idea with sententious and oracular brevity. Alas! how fatal has been the imitation of Montesquieu! But this obscurity sometimes proceeds from a mixture of light and darkness in the author's mind; from a partial ray which strikes upon an angle, instead of spreading itself over the surface of an object. After this fair confession I shall presume to say, that the Essay does credit to a young writer of two-and-twenty years of age, who has read with taste, who thinks with freedom, and who writes in a foreign language with spirit and elegance. The defence of the early History of Rome and the new Chronology of Sir Isaac Newton form a specious argument. The patriotic and political design of the Georgics is happily conceived; and any probable conjecture which tends to raise the dignity of the poet and the poem deserves to be adopted without a rigid scrutiny. Some dawnings of a philosophic spirit enlighten the general remarks on the study of history and of man. I am not displeased with the inquiry into the origin and nature of the gods of polytheism, which might deserve the illustration of a riper judgment. Upon the whole, I may apply to the first labour of my pen the speech of a far superior artist, when he surveyed the first productions of his pencil. After viewing some portraits which he had painted in his youth, my friend Sir Joshua Reynolds acknowledged to me that he was rather humbled than flattered by the comparison with his present works; and that after so much time and study, he had conceived his improvement to be much greater than he found it to have been.

At Lausanne I composed the first chapters of my Essay in French, the familiar language of my conversation and studies,

in which it was easier for me to write than in my mother tongue. After my return to England I continued the same practice, without any affectation, or design of repudiating (as Dr. Bentley would say) my vernacular idiom. But I should have escaped some Anti-Gallican clamour, had I been content with the more natural character of an English author. I should have been more consistent had I rejected Mallet's advice, of prefixing an English dedication to a French book—a confusion of tongues that seemed to accuse the ignorance of my patron. The use of a foreign dialect might be excused by the hope of being employed as a negotiator, by the desire of being generally understood on the Continent; but my true motive was doubtless the ambition of new and singular fame, an Englishman claiming a place among the writers of France. The Latin tongue had been consecrated by the service of the Church, it was refined by the imitation of the ancients; and in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the scholars of Europe enjoyed the advantage, which they have gradually resigned, of conversing and writing in a common and learned idiom. As that idiom was no longer in any country the vulgar speech, they all stood on a level with each other; yet a citizen of old Rome might have smiled at the best Latinity of the Germans and Britons; and we may learn from the Ciceronianus of Erasmus how difficult it was found to steer a middle course between pedantry and barbarism. The Romans themselves had sometimes attempted a more perilous task, of writing in a living language, and appealing to the taste and judgment of the natives. The vanity of Tully was doubly interested in the Greek memoirs of his own consulship; and if he modestly supposes that some Latinisms might be detected in his style, he is confident of his own skill in the art of Isocrates and Aristotle; and he requests his friend Atticus to disperse the copies of his work at Athens and in the other cities of Greece (Ad Atticum, i. 19; ii. 1). But it must not be forgotten that from infancy to manhood Cicero and his contemporaries had read and declaimed and composed with equal diligence in both languages, and that he was not allowed to frequent a Latin school till he had imbibed the lessons of the

Greek grammarians and rhetoricians. In modern times, the language of France has been diffused by the merit of her writers, the social manners of the natives, the influence of the monarchy, and the exile of the Protestants. Several foreigners have seized the opportunity of speaking to Europe in this common dialect; and Germany may plead the authority of Leibnitz and Frederic, of the first of her philosophers and the greatest of her kings. The just pride and laudable prejudice of England has restrained this communication of idioms; and of all the nations on this side of the Alps, my countrymen are the least practised and least perfect in the exercise of the French tongue. By Sir William Temple and Lord Chesterfield it was only used on occasions of civility and business, and their printed letters will not be quoted as models of composition. Lord Bolingbroke may have published in French a sketch of his Reflections on Exile, but his reputation now reposes on the address of Voltaire, "Docte sermones utriusque linguæ;" and by his English dedication to Queen Caroline, and his Essay on Epic Poetry, it should seem that Voltaire himself wished to deserve a return of the same compliment. The exception of Count Hamilton cannot fairly be urged. Though an Irishman by birth, he was educated in France from his childhood. Yet I am surprised that a long residence in England, and the habits of domestic conversation, did not affect the ease and purity of his inimitable style; and I regret the omission of his English verses, which might have afforded an amusing object of comparison. I might therefore assume the "primus ego in patriam," &c.; but with what success I have explored this untrodden path must be left to the decision of my French readers. Dr. Maty, who might himself be questioned as a foreigner, has secured his retreat at my expense. "Je ne crois pas que vous vous piquiez d'être moins facile à reconnoitre pour un Anglois que Lucullus pour un Romain." My friends at Paris have been more indulgent. They received me as a countryman, or at least as a provincial, but they were friends and Parisians.[1] The defects which

[1] The copious extracts which were given in the *Journal Étranger* by M. Suard, a judicious critic, must satisfy both the author and the public. I may here

Maty insinuates, "Ces traits saillans, ces figures hardies, ce sacrifice de la régle au sentiment, et de la cadence à la force," are the faults of the youth rather than of the stranger; and after the long and laborious exercise of my own language, I am conscious that my French style has been ripened and improved.

I have already hinted that the publication of my Essay was delayed till I had embraced the military profession. I shall now amuse myself with the recollection of an active scene which bears no affinity to any other period of my studious and social life.

In the outset of a glorious war, the English people had been defended by the aid of German mercenaries. A national militia has been the cry of every patriot since the Revolution; and this measure, both in parliament and in the field, was supported by the country gentlemen or Tories, who insensibly transferred their loyalty to the House of Hanover. In the language of Mr. Burke, they have changed the idol, but they have preserved the idolatry. In the act of offering our names and receiving our commissions as major and captain in the Hampshire regiment (June 12, 1759), we had not supposed that we should be dragged away, my father from his farm, myself from my books, and condemned during two years and a half (May 10, 1760—December 23, 1762) to a wandering life of military servitude. But a weekly or monthly exercise of thirty thousand provincials would have left them useless and ridiculous; and after the pretence of an invasion had vanished, the popularity of Mr. Pitt gave a sanction to the illegal step of keeping them till the end of the war under arms, in constant pay and duty, and at a distance from their respective homes. When the king's order for our embodying came down, it was too late to retreat and too soon to repent. The south battalion of the Hampshire militia was a small independent corps of 476 officers and men, commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Thomas Worsley, who, after a prolix and passionate contest, delivered us from the

observe, that I have never seen in any literary review a tolerable account of my History. The manufacture of journals, at least on the Continent, is miserably debased.

tyranny of the lord-lieutenant, the Duke of Bolton. My proper station, as first captain, was at the head of my own, and afterwards of the grenadier company; but in the absence, or even in the presence, of the two field-officers, I was entrusted by my friend and my father with the effective labour of dictating the orders and exercising the battalion. With the help of an original journal, I could write the history of my bloodless and inglorious campaigns; but as these events have lost much of their importance in my own eyes, they shall be despatched in a few words. From Winchester, the first place of assembly (June 4, 1760), we were removed at our own request for the benefit of a foreign education. By the arbitrary and often capricious orders of the War Office, the battalion successively marched to the pleasant and hospitable Blandford (June 17); to Hilsea Barracks, a seat of disease and discord (September 1); to Cranbrook, in the Weald of Kent (December 11); to the sea-coast of Dover (December 27); to Winchester Camp (June 25, 1761); to the populous and disorderly town of Devizes (October 23); to Salisbury (February 28, 1762); to our beloved Blandford a second time (March 9); and finally, to the fashionable resort of Southampton (June 2), where the colours were fixed till our final dissolution (December 23). On the beach at Dover we had exercised in sight of the Gallic shores. But the most splendid and useful scene of our life was a four months' encampment on Winchester Down, under the command of the Earl of Effingham. Our army consisted of the 34th regiment of foot and six militia corps. The consciousness of our defects was stimulated by friendly emulation. We improved our time and opportunities in morning and evening field-days; and in the general reviews the South Hampshire were rather a credit than a disgrace to the line. In our subsequent quarters of the Devizes and Blandford, we advanced with a quick step in our military studies; the ballot of the ensuing summer renewed our vigour and youth; and had the militia subsisted another year, we might have contested the prize with the most perfect of our brethren.

The loss of so many busy and idle hours was not compensated

by any elegant pleasure, and my temper was insensibly soured by the society of our rustic officers. In every state there exists, however, a balance of good and evil. The habits of a sedentary life were usefully broken by the duties of an active profession: in the healthful exercise of the field I hunted with a battalion instead of a pack; and at that time I was ready, at any hour of the day or night, to fly from quarters to London, from London to quarters, on the slightest call of private or regimental business. But my principal obligation to the militia was the making me an Englishman and a soldier. After my foreign education, with my reserved temper, I should long have continued a stranger in my native country, had I not been shaken in this various scene of new faces and new friends: had not experience forced me to feel the characters of our leading men, the state of parties, the forms of office, and the operation of our civil and military system. In this peaceful service I imbibed the rudiments of the language and science of tactics, which opened a new field of study and observation. I diligently read and meditated the Mémoires Militaires of Quintus Icilius (M. Guichardt), the only writer who has united the merits of a professor and a veteran. The discipline and evolutions of a modern battalion gave me a clearer notion of the phalanx and the legion; and the captain of the Hampshire Grenadiers (the reader may smile) has not been useless to the historian of the Roman Empire.

A youth of any spirit is fired even by the play of arms, and in the first sallies of my enthusiasm I had seriously attempted to embrace the regular profession of a soldier. But this military fever was cooled by the enjoyment of our mimic Bellona, who soon unveiled to my eyes her naked deformity. How often did I sigh for my proper station in society and letters. How often (a proud comparison) did I repeat the complaint of Cicero in the command of a provincial army: "Clitellæ bovi sunt impositæ. Est incredibile quam me negotii tædeat. Non habet satis magnum campum ille tibi non ignotus cursus animi; et industriæ meæ præclara opera cessat. Lucem, *libros*, urbem, domum, vos desidero. Sed feram, ut potero; sit modo annuum. Si prorogatur,

actum est."[1] From a service without danger I might indeed have retired without disgrace; but as often as I hinted a wish of resigning, my fetters were riveted by the friendly entreaties of the colonel, the parental authority of the major, and my own regard for the honour and welfare of the battalion. When I felt that my personal escape was impracticable, I bowed my neck to the yoke: my servitude was protracted far beyond the annual patience of Cicero; and it was not till after the preliminaries of peace that I received my discharge, from the act of government which disembodied the militia.[2]

[1] Epist. ad Atticum, lib. v. 15.

[2] *Journal, January 11th*, 1761.—In these seven or eight months of a most disagreeably active life, I have had no studies to set down; indeed, I hardly took a book in my hand the whole time. The first two months at Blandford, I might have done something; but the novelty of the thing, of which for some time I was so fond as to think of going into the army, our field-days, our dinners abroad, and the drinking and late hours we got into, prevented any serious reflections. From the day we marched from Blandford I had hardly a moment I could call my own, almost continually in motion. If I was fixed for a day, it was in the guard-room, a barrack, or an inn. Our disputes consumed the little time I had left. Every letter, every memorial relative to them fell to my share; and our evening conferences were used to hear all the morning hours strike. At last I got to Dover, and Sir Thomas left us for two months. The charm was over; I was sick of so hateful a service; I was settled in a comparatively quiet situation. Once more I began to taste the pleasure of thinking.

Recollecting some thoughts I had formerly had in relation to the system of Paganism, which I intended to make use of in my Essay, I resolved to read Tully de Naturâ Deorum, and finished it in about a month. I lost some time before I could recover my habit of application.

Oct. 23rd.—Our first design was to march through Marlborough; but finding on inquiry that it was a bad road, and a great way about, we resolved to push for the Devizes in one day, though nearly thirty miles. We accordingly arrived there about three o'clock in the afternoon.

Nov. 2nd.—I have very little to say for this and the following month. Nothing could be more uniform than the life I led there. The little civility of the neighbouring gentlemen gave us no opportunity of dining out; the time of year did not tempt us to any excursions round the country; and at first my indolence, and afterwards a violent cold, prevented my going over to Bath. I believe in the two months I never dined or lay from quarters. I can therefore only set down what I did in the literary way. Designing to recover my Greek, which I had somewhat neglected, I set myself to read Homer, and finished the four first books of the Iliad, with Pope's translation and notes. At the same time, to understand the geography of the Iliad, and particularly the catalogue, I read the 8th, 9th, 10th, 12th, 13th, and 14th books of Strabo, in Casaubon's Latin translation. I likewise read Hume's History of England to the Reign of Henry the Seventh, just published, ingenious but superficial; and the *Journals des Sçavans* for August, September,

When I complain of the loss of time, justice to myself and to the militia must throw the greatest part of that reproach on the first

and October 1761, with the *Bibliotheque des Sciences*, &c., from July to October. Both these journals speak very handsomely of my book.

December 25th, 1761.—When, upon finishing the year, I take a review of what I have done, I am not dissatisfied with what I did in it, upon making proper allowances. On the one hand, I could begin nothing before the middle of January. The Deal duty lost me part of February; although I was at home part of March and all April, yet electioneering is no friend to the Muses. May, indeed, though dissipated by our sea parties, was pretty quiet; but June was absolutely lost upon the march, at Alton, and settling ourselves in camp. The four succeeding months in camp allowed me little leisure and less quiet. November and December were indeed as much my own as any time can be whilst I remain in the militia; but still it is at best not a life for a man of letters. However, in this tumultuous year (besides smaller things which I have set down), I read four books of Homer in Greek, six of Strabo in Latin, Cicero de Naturâ Deorum, and the great philosophical and theological work of M. de Beausobre. I wrote in the same time a long dissertation on the succession of Naples; reviewed, fitted for the press, and augmented above a fourth, my Essai sur l'Étude de la Litterature.

In the six weeks I passed at Beriton, as I never stirred from it, every day was like the former. I had neither visits, hunting, or walking. My only resources were myself, my books, and family conversations. But to me these were great resources.

April 24th, 1762.—I waited upon Colonel Harvey in the morning, to get him to apply for me to be brigade-major to Lord Effingham, as a post I should be very fond of, and for which I am not unfit. Harvey received me with great good-nature and candour, told me he was both willing and able to serve me, that indeed he had already applied to Lord Effingham for ——, one of his own officers, and though there would be more than one brigade-major, he did not think he could properly recommend two; but that if I could get some other person to break the ice, he would second it, and believed he should succeed. Should that fail, as —— was in bad circumstances, he believed he could make a compromise with him (this was my desire) to let me do the duty without pay. I went from him to the Mallets, who promised to get Sir Charles Howard to speak to Lord Effingham.

August 22nd.—I went with Ballard to the French church, where I heard a most indifferent sermon preached by M. ——. A very bad style, a worse pronunciation and action, and a very great vacuity of ideas, composed this excellent performance. Upon the whole, which is preferable, the philosophic method of the English or the rhetoric of the French preachers? The first (though less glorious) is certainly safer for the preacher. It is difficult for a man to make himself ridiculous who proposes only to deliver plain sense on a subject he has thoroughly studied. But the instant he discovers the least pretensions towards the sublime or the pathetic, there is no medium; we must either admire or laugh; and there are so many various talents requisite to form the character of an orator that it is more than probable we shall laugh. As to the advantage of the hearer, which ought to be the great consideration, the dilemma is much greater. Excepting in some particular cases, where we are blinded by popular prejudices, we are in general so well acquainted with our duty that it is almost superfluous to convince us of it. It is the heart, and not the head, that holds out; and it is certainly possible, by a moving eloquence, to rouse the sleeping sentiments of that heart and incite it to

seven or eight months, while I was obliged to learn as well as to teach. The dissipation of Blandford, and the disputes of Ports-

acts of virtue. Unluckily, it is not so much acts as habits of virtue we should have in view; and the preacher who is inculcating, with the eloquence of a Bourdaloue, the necessity of a virtuous life, will dismiss his assembly full of emotions, which a variety of other objects, the coldness of our northern constitutions, and no immediate opportunity of exerting their good resolutions, will dissipate in a few moments.

August 24th.—The same reason that carried so many people to the assembly to-night was what kept me away—I mean the dancing.

28th.—To-day Sir Thomas came to us to dinner. The Spa has done him a great deal of good, for he looks another man. Pleased to see him, we kept bumperising till after roll-calling, Sir Thomas assuring us, every fresh bottle, how infinitely soberer he was grown.

29th.—I felt the usual consequences of Sir Thomas's company, and lost a morning, because I had lost the day before. However, having finished Voltaire, I returned to Le Clerc (I mean for the amusement of my leisure hours), and laid aside for some time his Bibliotheque Universelle to look into the Bibliotheque Choisse, which is by far the better work.

September 23rd.—Colonel Wilkes, of the Buckinghamshire militia, dined with us, and renewed the acquaintance Sir Thomas and myself had begun with him at Reading. I scarcely ever met with a better companion. He has inexhaustible spirits, infinite wit and humour, and a great deal of knowledge. He told us himself that in this time of public dissension he was resolved to make his fortune. Upon this principle he has connected himself closely with Lord Temple and Mr. Pitt, commenced a public adversary to Lord Bute, whom he abuses weekly in the *North Briton* and other political papers in which he is concerned. This proved a very debauched day. We drank a good deal both after dinner and supper; and when at last Wilkes had retired, Sir Thomas and some others (of whom I was not one) broke into his room and made him drink a bottle of claret in bed.

October 5th.—The review, which lasted about three hours, concluded as usual with marching by Lord Effingham by grand divisions. Upon the whole, considering the camp had done both the Winchester and the Gosport duties all the summer, they behaved very well, and made a fine appearance. As they marched by, I had my usual curiosity to count their files. The following is my field return: I think it a curiosity; I am sure it is more exact than is commonly made to a reviewing general.

		Number of Files.		Number of Men.	Establishment.
Berkshire	Grenadiers	19	91	273	560
	Battalion	72			
W. Essex	Grenadiers	15	95	285	480
	Battalion	80			
S. Gloster	Grenadiers	20	104	312	600
	Battalion	84			
N. Gloster	Grenadiers	13	65	195	360
	Battalion	52			
Lancashire	Grenadiers	20	108	324	800
	Battalion	88			
Wiltshire	Grenadiers	24	144	432	800
	Battalion	120			
	Total	607		1821	3600

mouth, consumed the hours which were not employed in the field; and amid the perpetual hurry of an inn, a barrack, or a guard-

N.B.—The Gosport detachment from the Lancashire consisted of 250 men. The Buckinghamshire took the Winchester duty that day.

So that this camp in England, supposed complete, with only one detachment, had under arms, on the day of the grand review, little more than half their establishment. This amazing deficiency (though exemplified in every regiment I have seen) is an extraordinary military phenomenon. What must it be upon foreign service? I doubt whether a nominal army of an hundred thousand men often brings fifty into the field.

Upon our return to Southampton in the evening we found Sir Thomas Worsley.

October 21st.—One of those impulses, which it is neither very easy nor very necessary to withstand, drew me from Longinus to a very different subject, the Greek Calendar. Last night, when in bed, I was thinking of a dissertation of M. de la Nauze upon the Roman Calendar, which I read last year. This led me to consider what was the Greek; and finding myself very ignorant of it, I determined to read a short but very excellent abstract of Mr. Dodwell's book De Cyclis, by the famous Dr. Halley. It is only twenty-five pages; but as I meditated it thoroughly, and verified all the calculations, it was a very good morning's work.

October 28th.—I looked over a new Greek Lexicon which I have just received from London. It is that of Robert Constantine, Lugdun. 1637. It is a very large volume in folio, in two parts, comprising in the whole 1785 pages. After the great Thesaurus, this is esteemed the best Greek Lexicon. It seems to be so. Of a variety of words for which I looked, I always found an exact definition; the various senses well distinguished, and properly supported by the best authorities. However, I still prefer the radical method of Scapula to this alphabetical one.

December 11th.—I have already given an idea of the Gosport duty; I shall only add a trait which characterises admirably our unthinking sailors. At a time when they knew that they should infallibly be discharged in a few weeks, numbers, who had considerable wages due to them, were continually jumping over the walls, and risking the losing of it for a few hours' amusement at Portsmouth.

17th.—We found old Captain Meard at Alresford with the second division of the fourteenth. He and all his officers supped with us, and made the evening rather a drunken one.

18th.—About the same hour our two corps paraded to march off. They, an old corps of regulars, who had been two years quiet in Dover Castle. We, part of a young body of militia, two-thirds of our men recruits of four months' standing, two of which they had passed upon very disagreeable duty. Every advantage was on their side, and yet our superiority, both as to appearance and discipline, was so striking, that the most prejudiced regular could not have hesitated a moment. At the end of the town our two companies separated. My father's struck off for Petersfield, whilst I continued my route to Alton, into which place I marched my company about noon, two years six months and fifteen days after my first leaving it. I gave the men some beer at roll-calling, which they received with great cheerfulness and decency. I dined and lay at Harrison's, where I was received with that old-fashioned breeding which is at once so honourable and so troublesome.

23rd.—Our two companies were disembodied—mine at Alton, and my father's at Beriton. Smith marched them over from Petersfield. They fired three volleys, lodged the major's colours, delivered up their arms, received their money, partook

room, all literary ideas were banished from my mind. After this long fast, the longest which I have ever known, I once more tasted at Dover the pleasures of reading and thinking; and the hungry appetite with which I opened a volume of Tully's philosophical works is still present to my memory. The last review of my Essay before its publication had prompted me to investigate the nature of the gods. My inquiries led me to the Histoire

of a dinner at the major's expense, and then separated with great cheerfulness and regularity. Thus ended the militia; I may say ended, since our annual assemblies in May are so very precarious, and can be of so little use. However, our sergeants and drums are still kept up, and quartered at the rendezvous of their company, and the adjutant remains at Southampton in full pay.

As this was an extraordinary scene of life, in which I was engaged above three years and a half from the date of my commission, and above two years and a half from the time of our embodying, I cannot take my leave of it without some few reflections. When I engaged in it, I was totally ignorant of its nature and consequences. I offered, because my father did, without ever imagining that we should be called out, till it was too late to retreat with honour. Indeed, I believe it happens throughout, that our most important actions have been often determined by chance, caprice, or some very inadequate motive. After our embodying, many things contributed to make me support it with great impatience. Our continual disputes with the Duke of Bolton; our unsettled way of life, which hardly allowed me books or leisure for study; and more than all, the disagreeable society in which I was forced to live.

After mentioning my sufferings, I must say something of what I found agreeable. Now it is over, I can make the separation much better than I could at the time. 1. The unsettled way of life itself had its advantages. The exercise and change of air and objects amused me, at the same time that it fortified my health. 2. A new field of knowledge and amusement opened itself to me—that of military affairs, which, both in my studies and travels, will give me eyes for a new world of things, which before would have passed unheeded. Indeed, in that respect I can hardly help wishing our battalion had continued another year. We had got a fine set of new men, all our difficulties were over; we were perfectly well clothed and appointed; and, from the progress our recruits had already made, we could promise ourselves that we should be one of the best militia corps by next summer—a circumstance that would have been the more agreeable to me, as I am now established the real acting major of the battalion. But what I value most is the knowledge it has given me of mankind in general, and of my own country in particular. The general system of our government, the methods of our several offices, the departments and powers of their respective officers, our provincial and municipal administration, the views of our several parties, the characters, connections, and influence of our principal people, have been impressed on my mind, not by vain theory, but by the indelible lessons of action and experience. I have made a number of valuable acquaintance, and am myself much better known than (with my reserved character) I should have been in ten years, passing regularly my summers at Beriton, and my winters in London. So that the sum of all is, that I am glad the militia has been, and glad that it is no more.

Critique du Manichèisme of Beausobre, who discusses many deep questions of Pagan and Christian theology; and from this rich treasury of facts and opinions I deduced my own consequences, beyond the holy circle of the author. After this recovery, I never relapsed into indolence; and my example might prove that, in the life most averse to study, some hours may be stolen, some minutes may be snatched. Amidst the tumult of Winchester camp I sometimes thought and read in my tent; in the more settled quarters of the Devizes, Blandford, and Southampton, I always secured a separate lodging, and the necessary books; and in the summer of 1762, while the new militia was raising, I enjoyed at Beriton two or three months of literary repose.[1] In forming a new plan of study, I hesitated between the mathematics and the Greek language, both of which I had neglected since my return from Lausanne. I consulted a learned and friendly mathematician, Mr. George Scott, a pupil of De Moivre; and his map of a country which I have never explored may perhaps be more serviceable to others. As soon as I had given the preference to Greek, the example of Scaliger and my own reason determined me on the choice of Homer, the father of poetry, and the Bible of the ancients. But Scaliger ran through the Iliad in one and twenty days, and I was not dissatisfied with my own diligence for performing the same labour in an equal number of weeks. After the first difficulties were surmounted, the language

[1] *Journal, May 8th*, 1762.—This was my birthday, on which I entered into the twenty-sixth year of my age. This gave me occasion to look a little into myself, and consider impartially my good and bad qualities. It appeared to me, upon this inquiry, that my character was virtuous, incapable of a base action, and formed for generous ones; but that it was proud, violent, and disagreeable in society. These qualities I must endeavour to cultivate, extirpate, or restrain, according to their different tendency. Wit I have none. My imagination is rather strong than pleasing. My memory both capacious and retentive. The shining qualities of my understanding are extensiveness and penetration; but I want both quickness and exactness. As to my situation in life, though I may sometimes repine at it, it perhaps is the best adapted to my character. I can command all the conveniences of life, and I can command too that independence (that first earthly blessing), which is hardly to be met with in a higher or lower fortune. When I talk of my situation, I must exclude that temporary one of being in the militia. Though I go through it with spirit and application, it is both unfit for and unworthy of me.

of nature and harmony soon became easy and familiar, and each day I sailed upon the ocean with a brisker gale and a more steady course.

Ἐν δ' ἄνεμος πρῆσεν μέσον ἱστίον, ἀμφὶ δὲ κῦμα
Στείρῃ πορφύρεον μεγάλ' ἴαχε, νηὸς ἰούσης·
Ἡ δ' ἴθυεν κατὰ κῦμα διαπρήσσουσα κέλευθα.[1]

—*Ilias*, A. 481.

In the study of a poet who has since become the most intimate of my friends, I successively applied many passages and fragments of Greek writers, and among these I shall notice a life of Homer, in the Opuscula Mythologica of Gale, several books of the geography of Strabo, and the entire treatise of Longinus, which, from the title and the style, is equally worthy of the epithet of sublime. My grammatical skill was improved, my vocabulary was enlarged; and in the militia I acquired a just and indelible knowledge of the first of languages. On every march, in every journey, Horace was always in my pocket, and often in my hand; but I should not mention his two critical epistles, the amusement of a morning, had they not been accompanied by the elaborate commentary of Dr. Hurd, now Bishop of Worcester. On the interesting subjects of composition and imitation of epic and dramatic poetry, I presumed to think for myself, and thirty close-written pages in folio could scarcely comprise my full and free discussion of the sense of the master and the pedantry of the servant.

After his oracle Dr. Johnson, my friend Sir Joshua Reynolds denies all original genius, any natural propensity of the mind to one art or science rather than another. Without engaging in a metaphysical or rather verbal dispute, I know, by experience, that from my early youth I aspired to the character of an historian.

[1] "Fair wind, and blowing fresh,
Apollo sent them; quick they reared the mast,
Then spread th' unsullied canvas to the gale,
And the wind filled it. Roared the sable flood
Around the bark, that ever as she went
Dashed wide the brine, and scudded swift away."
—COWPER'S *Homer*.

While I served in the militia, before and after the publication of my essay, this idea ripened in my mind; nor can I paint in more lively colours the feelings of the moment, than by transcribing some passages, under their respective dates, from a journal which I kept at that time.

BERITON, *April* 14, 1761.

(In a short excursion from Dover.)

"Having thought of several subjects for an historical composition, I chose the expedition of Charles VIII. of France into Italy. I read two memoirs of M. de Foncemagne in the Academy of Inscriptions (tom. xvii. p. 539–607), and abstracted them. I likewise finished this day a dissertation, in which I examine the right of Charles VIII. to the crown of Naples, and the rival claims of the House of Anjou and Arragon. It consists of ten folio pages, besides large notes."

BERITON, *August* 4, 1761.

(In a week's excursion from Winchester Camp.)

"After having long revolved subjects for my intended historical essay, I renounced my first thought of the expedition of Charles VIII. as too remote from us, and rather an introduction to great events, than great and important in itself. I successively chose and rejected the Crusade of Richard I., the Barons' Wars against John and Henry III., the history of Edward the Black Prince, the lives and comparisons of Henry V. and the Emperor Titus, the life of Sir Philip Sidney, and that of the Marquis of Montrose. At length I have fixed on Sir Walter Raleigh for my hero. His eventful story is varied by the characters of the soldier and sailor, the courtier and historian; and it may afford such a fund of materials as I desire, which have not yet been properly manufactured. At present I cannot attempt the execution of this work. Free leisure and the opportunity of consulting many books, both printed and manuscript, are as necessary as they are impossible to be attained in my present

way of life. However, to acquire a general insight into my subject and resources, I read the Life of Sir Walter Raleigh by Dr. Birch, the copious article in the General Dictionary by the same hand, and the reigns of Queen Elizabeth and James I. in Hume's History of England."

BERITON, *January* 1762.

(In a month's absence from the Devizes.)

"During this interval of repose I again turned my thoughts to Sir Walter Raleigh, and looked more closely into my materials. I read the two volumes in quarto of the Bacon Papers, published by Dr. Birch; the Fragmenta Regalia of Sir Robert Naunton; Mallet's Life of Lord Bacon, and the political treatises of that great man in the first volume of his works, with many of his letters in the second; Sir William Monson's Naval Tracts, and the elaborate Life of Sir Walter Raleigh, which Mr. Oldys has prefixed to the best edition of his History of the World. My subject opens upon me, and in general improves upon a nearer prospect."

BERITON, *July* 26, 1762.

(During my summer residence.)

"I am afraid of being reduced to drop my hero; but my time has not, however, been lost in the research of his story, and of a memorable era of our English annals. The Life of Sir Walter Raleigh by Oldys is a very poor performance; a servile panegyric or flat apology, tediously minute, and composed in a dull and affected style. Yet the author was a man of diligence and learning, who had read everything relative to his subject, and whose ample collections are arranged with perspicuity and method. Excepting some anecdotes lately revealed in the Sidney and Bacon Papers, I know not what I should be able to add. My ambition (exclusive of the uncertain merit of style and sentiment) must be confined to the hope of giving a good abridgment of Oldys. I have even the disappointment of finding some parts

of this copious work very dry and barren; and these parts are unluckily some of the most characteristic: Raleigh's colony of Virginia, his quarrels with Essex, the true secret of his conspiracy, and, above all, the detail of his private life, the most essential and important to a biographer. My best resource would be in the circumjacent history of the times, and perhaps in some digressions artfully introduced, like the fortunes of the Peripatetic philosophy in the portrait of Lord Bacon. But the reigns of Elizabeth and James I. are the periods of English history which have been the most variously illustrated; and what new lights could I reflect on a subject which has exercised the accurate industry of Birch, the lively and curious acuteness of Walpole, the critical spirit of Hurd, the vigorous sense of Mallet and Robertson, and the impartial philosophy of Hume? Could I even surmount these obstacles I should shrink with terror from the modern history of England, where every character is a problem, and every reader a friend or an enemy; where a writer is supposed to hoist a flag of party, and is devoted to damnation by the adverse faction. Such would be my reception at home; and abroad, the historian of Raleigh must encounter an indifference far more bitter than censure or reproach. The events of his life are interesting, but his character is ambiguous, his actions are obscure, his writings are English, and his fame is confined to the narrow limits of our language and our island. I must embrace a safer and more extensive theme.

"There is one which I should prefer to all others, the History of the Liberty of the Swiss, of that independence which a brave people rescued from the House of Austria, defended against a Dauphin of France, and finally sealed with the blood of Charles of Burgundy. From such a theme, so full of public spirit, of military glory, of examples of virtue, of lessons of government, the dullest stranger would catch fire: what might not I hope, whose talents, whatsoever they may be, would be inflamed with the zeal of patriotism. But the materials of this history are inaccessible to me, fast locked in the obscurity of an old barbarous German dialect, of which I am totally ignorant,

and which I cannot resolve to learn for this sole and peculiar purpose.

"I have another subject in view, which is the contrast of the former history: the one a poor, warlike, virtuous republic, which emerges into glory and freedom; the other a commonwealth, soft, opulent, and corrupt, which by just degrees is precipitated from the abuse to the loss of her liberty. Both lessons are, perhaps, equally instructive. This second subject is the History of the Republic of Florence, under the House of Medicis: a period of one hundred and fifty years, which rises or descends from the dregs of the Florentine democracy to the title and dominion of Cosmo de Medicis in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany. I might deduce a chain of revolutions not unworthy of the pen of Vertot; singular men and singular events; the Medicis four times expelled, and as often recalled; and the Genius of Freedom reluctantly yielding to the arms of Charles V. and the policy of Cosmo. The character and fate of Savonarola, and the revival of arts and letters in Italy, will be essentially connected with the elevation of the family and the fall of the republic. The Medicis (stirps quasi fataliter nata ad instauranda vel fovenda studia Lipsius ad Germanos et Gallos, Epist. viii.) were illustrated by the patronage of learning; and enthusiasm was the most formidable weapon of their adversaries. On this splendid subject I shall most probably fix; but when, or where, or how it will be executed, I behold in a dark and doubtful perspective."

Res altâ terrâ, et caligine mersas.[1]

[1] *Journal, July 27th, 1762.*—The reflections which I was making yesterday I continued and digested to-day. I don't absolutely look on that time as lost, but that it might have been better employed than in revolving schemes the execution of which is so far distant. I must learn to check these wanderings of my imagination.

Nov. 24th.—I dined at the Cocoa Tree with ——, who, under a great appearance of oddity, conceals more real honour, good sense, and even knowledge, than half those who laugh at him. We went thence to the play (the Spanish Friar); and when it was over, returned to the Cocoa Tree. That respectable body, of which I have the honour of being a member, affords every evening a sight truly English. Twenty or thirty, perhaps, of the first men in the kingdom, in point of fashion and fortune, supping at little tables covered with a napkin, in the middle of a coffee-room, upon a bit of cold meat, or a sandwich, and drinking a glass

The youthful habits of the language and manners of France had left in my mind an ardent desire of revisiting the Continent on a larger and more liberal plan. According to the law of custom, and perhaps of reason, foreign travel completes the education of an English gentleman. My father had consented to my wish, but I was detained above four years by my rash engagement in the

of punch. At present we are full of king's counsellors and lords of the bed-chamber, who, having jumped into the ministry, make a very singular medley of their old principles and language with their modern ones.

Nov. 26th.—I went with Mallet to breakfast with Garrick; and thence to Drury Lane House, where I assisted at a very private rehearsal, in the green-room, of a new tragedy of Mallet's, called Elvira. As I have not since seen it acted, I shall defer my opinion of it till then; but I cannot help mentioning here the surprising versatility of Mrs. Pritchard's talents, who rehearsed, almost at the same time, the part of a furious queen in the green-room, and that of a coquette on the stage; and passed several times from one to the other with the utmost ease and happiness.

Dec. 30th.—Before I close the year I must balance my accounts—not of money, but of time. I may divide my studies into four branches. 1. Books that I have read for themselves, classic writers, or capital treatises upon any science; such books as ought to be perused with attention, and meditated with care. Of these I read the twenty last books of the Iliad twice, the three first books of the Odyssey, the Life of Homer, and Longinus περὶ Ὕψους. 2. Books which I have read, or consulted, to illustrate the former. Such as this year, Blackwall's Inquiry into the Life and Writings of Homer, Burke's Sublime and Beautiful, Hurd's Horace, Guichard's Mémoires Militaires, a great variety of passages of the ancients occasionally useful: large extracts from Mezeriac, Bayle, and Potter; and many memoirs and abstracts from the Academy of Belles Lettres. Among these I shall only mention here two long and curious suites of dissertations—the one upon the Temple of Delphi, the Amphictyonic Council, and the Holy Wars, by MM. Hardion and de Valois; the other upon the Games of the Grecians, by MM. Burette, Gedoyne, and de la Barrie. 3. Books of amusement and instruction, perused at my leisure hours, without any reference to a regular plan of study. Of these, perhaps, I read too many, since I went through the Life of Erasmus, by Le Clerc and Burigny, many extracts from Le Clerc's Bibliothèques, The Ciceronianus, and Colloquies of Erasmus, Barclay's Argenis, Terasson's Sethos, Voltaire's Siècle de Louis XIV., Madame de Motteville's Memoirs, and Fontenelle's Works. 4. Compositions of my own. I find hardly any, except this journal, and the Extract of Hurd's Horace, which (like a chapter of Montaigne) contains many things very different from its title. To these four heads I must this year add a fifth. 5. Those treatises of English history which I read in January, with a view to my now abortive scheme of the Life of Sir Walter Raleigh. I ought indeed to have known my own mind better before I undertook them. Upon the whole, after making proper allowances, I am not dissatisfied with the year.

The three weeks which I passed at Bériton, at the end of this and the beginning of the ensuing year, are almost a blank. I seldom went out; and as the scheme of my travelling was at last entirely settled, the hurry of impatience, the cares of preparations, and the tenderness of friends I was going to quit, allowed me hardly any moments for study.

militia. I eagerly grasped the first moments of freedom. Three or four weeks in Hampshire and London were employed in the preparations of my journey, and the farewell visits of friendship and civility: my last act in town was to applaud Mallet's new tragedy of Elvira;[1] a post-chaise conveyed me to Dover, the

[1] *Journal, January 11th*, 1763.—I called upon Dr. Maty in the morning. He told me that the Duke de Nivernois desired to be acquainted with me. It was indeed with that view that I had written to Maty from Beriton to present, in my name, a copy of my book to him. Thence I went to Becket, paid him his bill (£54.. and gave him back his translation. It must be printed, though very indifferent. My comfort is that my misfortune is not an uncommon one. We dined and supped at the Mallets.

12th.—I went with Maty to visit the Duke in Albemarle Street. He is a little emaciated figure, but appears to possess a good understanding, taste, and knowledge. He offered me very politely letters for Paris. We dined at our lodgings. I went to Covent Garden to see Woodward in Bobadil, and supped with the Mallets at George Scott's.

19th.—I waited upon Lady Hervey and the Duke de Nivernois, and received my credentials. Lady Hervey's are for M. le Comte de Caylus and Madame Geoffrin. The Duke received me civilly, but (perhaps through Maty's fault) treated me more as a man of letters than as a man of fashion. His letters are entirely in that style; for the Count de Caylus and MM. de la Bleterie, de St. Palaye, Caperonnier, du Clos, de Forcemagne, and d'Alembert. I then undressed for the play. My father and I went to the Rose, in the passage of the playhouse, where we found Mallet, with about thirty friends. We dined together, and went thence into the pit, where we took our places in a body, ready to silence all opposition. However, we had no occasion to exert ourselves. Notwithstanding the malice of party, Mallet's nation, connections, and, indeed, imprudence, we heard nothing but applause. I think it was deserved. The plan was borrowed from De la Motte, but the details and language have great merit. A fine vein of dramatic poetry runs through the piece. The scenes between the father and son awaken almost every sensation of the human breast; and the counsel would have equally moved, but for the inconvenience unavoidable upon all theatres, that of entrusting fine speeches to indifferent actors. The perplexity of the catastrophe is much, and I believe justly, criticised. But another defect made a stronger impression upon me. When a poet ventures upon the dreadful situation of a father who condemns his son to death, there is no medium, the father must either be a monster or a hero. His obligations of justice, of the public good, must be as binding, as apparent, as perhaps those of the first Brutus. The cruel necessity consecrates his actions, and leaves no room for repentance. The thought is shocking, if not carried into action. In the execution of Brutus's sons I am sensible of that fatal necessity. Without such an example, the unsettled liberty of Rome would have perished the instant after its birth. But Alonzo might have pardoned his son for a rash attempt, the cause of which was a private injury, and whose consequences could never have disturbed an established government. He might have pardoned such a crime in any other subject; and as the laws could exact only an equal rigour for a son, a vain appetite for glory, and a mad affectation of heroism, could alone have influenced him to exert an unequal and superior severity.

packet to Boulogne, and such was my diligence that I reached Paris on the 28th of January 1763, only thirty-six days after the disbanding of the militia. Two or three years were loosely defined for the term of my absence; and I was left at liberty to spend that time in such places and in such a manner as was most agreeable to my taste and judgment.

In this first visit I passed three months and a half (January 28—May 9), and a much longer space might have been agreeably filled without any intercourse with the natives. At home we are content to move in the daily round of pleasure and business; and a scene which is always present is supposed to be within our knowledge, or at least within our power. But in a foreign country curiosity is our business and our pleasure; and the traveller, conscious of his ignorance and covetous of his time, is diligent in the search and the view of every object that can deserve his attention. I devoted many hours of the morning to the circuit of Paris and the neighbourhood, to the visit of churches and palaces conspicuous by their architecture, to the royal manufactures, collections of books and pictures, and all the various treasures of art, of learning, and of luxury. An Englishman may hear without reluctance that in these curious and costly articles Paris is superior to London, since the opulence of the French capital arises from the defects of its government and religion. In the absence of Louis XIV. and his successors the Louvre has been left unfinished; but the millions which have been lavished on the sands of Versailles and the morass of Marli could not be supplied by the legal allowance of a British king. The splendour of the French nobles is confined to their town residence; that of the English is more usefully distributed in their country seats; and we should be astonished at our own riches if the labours of architecture, the spoils of Italy and Greece, which are now scattered from Inverary to Wilton, were accumulated in a few streets between Marylebone and Westminster. All superfluous ornament is rejected by the cold frugality of the Protestants; but the Catholic superstition, which is always the enemy of reason, is often the parent of the arts. The wealthy communities of priests and monks expend

their revenues in stately edifices; and the parish church of St. Sulpice, one of the noblest structures in Paris, was built and adorned by the private industry of a late curé. In this outset, and still more in the sequel of my tour, my eye was amused; but the pleasing vision cannot be fixed by the pen, the particular images are darkly seen through the medium of five-and-twenty years, and the narrative of my life must not degenerate into a book of travels.[1]

But the principal end of my journey was to enjoy the society of a polished and amiable people, in whose favour I was strongly prejudiced, and to converse with some authors, whose conversation, as I fondly imagined, must be far more pleasing and instructive than their writings. The moment was happily chosen. At the close of a successful war the British name was respected on the Continent.

"Clarum et venerabile nomen
Gentibus."

Our opinions, our fashions, even our games, were adopted in France, a ray of national glory illuminated each individual, and every Englishman was supposed to be born a patriot and a philosopher. For myself, I carried a personal recommendation; my name and my Essay were already known; the compliment of having written in the French language entitled me to some returns of

[1] *Journal*, 21 *Fevrier* 1763.—Aujourdhui j'ai commencé ma tournée, pour voir les endroits dignes d'attention dans la ville. D'Augny m'a accompagné. Nous sommes allés d'abord à la bibliothèque de l'Abbaye de St. Germain des Prez, où tout le monde étoit occupé à l'arrangement d'un cabinet de curiosités, et à l'Hôpital des Invalides, où le dôme étoit fermé à cause des reparations qu'on y faisoit. Il faut donc differer la visite et la description de ces deux endroits. De là nous sommes allés voir l'École Militaire. Comme ce bâtiment s'éleve à coté des Invalides, bien des gens y verroient un moyen assez facile d'apprécier les ames differentes de leurs fondateurs. Dans l'un tout est grand et fastueux, dans l'autre tout est petit et mesquin. De petits corps de logis blancs et assez propres, qui, au lieu de 500 gentilshommes, dont on a parlé, en contiennent 258, composent tout l'établissement; car le manége et les écuries ne sont rien. Il est vrai qu'on dit que ces batimens ne sont qu'un échaffaudage, qu'on doit ôter, pour élever le véritable ouvrage sur ces débris. Il faut bien en effet qu'on n'ait pas bâti pour l'éternité, puisque dans vingt ans la plûpart des poutres se font pourries. Nous jettâmes ensuite un coup d'oeil sur l'église de St. Sulpice, dont la façade (le prétexte et le fruit de tant de lotteries) n'est point encore achevée.

civility and gratitude. I was considered as a man of letters who wrote for amusement. Before my departure I had obtained from the Duke de Nivernois, Lady Hervey, the Mallets, Mr. Walpole, &c., many letters of recommendation to their private or literary friends. Of these epistles the reception and success were determined by the character and situation of the persons by whom and to whom they were addressed; the seed was sometimes cast on a barren rock, and it sometimes multiplied an hundredfold in the production of new shoots, spreading branches, and exquisite fruit. But upon the whole I had reason to praise the national urbanity, which from the court has diffused its gentle influence to the shop, the cottage, and the schools. Of the men of genius of the age, Montesquieu and Fontenelle were no more; Voltaire resided on his own estate near Geneva; Rousseau in the preceding year had been driven from his hermitage of Montmorency; and I blush at my having neglected to seek, in this journey, the acquaintance of Buffon. Among the men of letters whom I saw, D'Alembert and Diderot held the foremost rank in merit, or at least in fame. I shall content myself with enumerating the well-known names of the Count de Caylus, of the Abbé de la Bleterie, Barthelemy, Reynal, Arnaud, of Messieurs de la Condamine, du Clos, de St. Palaye, de Bougainville, Caperonnier, de Guignes, Suard, &c., without attempting to discriminate the shades of their characters, or the degrees of our connection. Alone, in a morning visit, I commonly found the artists and authors of Paris less vain and more reasonable than in the circles of their equals with whom they mingle in the houses of the rich. Four days in a week I had a place, without invitation, at the hospitable tables of Mesdames Geoffrin and du Bocage, of the celebrated Helvetius, and of the Baron d'Holbach. In these symposia the pleasures of the table were improved by lively and liberal conversation; the company was select, though various and voluntary.[1]

1 *Journal, Fevrier* 23, 1763.—Je fis une visite à l'Abbé de la Bleterie, qui veut me mener chez la Duchesse d'Aiguillon; je me fis écrire chez M. de Bougainville que j'ai grande envie de connoître, et me rendis ensuite chez le Baron d'Olbach, ami de M. Helvetius. C'etoit ma premiére visite, et le premier pas dans une fort

The society of Madame du Bocage was more soft and moderate than that of her rivals, and the evening conversations of M. de Foncemagne were supported by the good sense and learning of the principal members of the Academy of Inscriptions. The opera and the Italians I occasionally visited; but the French theatre, both in tragedy and comedy, was my daily and favourite amusement. Two famous actresses then divided the public applause. For my own part I preferred the consummate art of the Clairon to the intemperate sallies of the Dumesnil, which were extolled by her admirers as the genuine voice of nature and passion. Fourteen weeks insensibly stole away; but had I been rich and independent I should have prolonged, and perhaps have fixed, my residence at Paris.

Between the expensive style of Paris and of Italy, it was prudent to interpose some months of tranquil simplicity; and at the thoughts of Lausanne I again lived in the pleasures and

bonne maison. Le Baron a de l'esprit et des connoissances, et surtout il donne souvent et fort bien à diner.

Fevrier 24.—L'Abbé Barthelemy est fort aimable et n'a de l'antiquaire qu'une très grande érudition. Je finis la soirée par un souper très agréable chez Madame Bontems avec M. le Marquis de Mirabeau. Cet homme est singulier; il a assez d'imagination pour dix autres, et pas assez de sens rassis pour lui seul. Je lui ai fait beaucoup de questions sur les titres de la noblesse Francoise; mais tout ce que j'en ai pu comprendre, c'est que personne n'a là dessus des idées bien nettes.

Mai 1763.—Muni d'une double lettre de recommandation pour M. le Comte de Caylus, je m'étois imaginé que je trouverois reunis en lui l'homme de lettres et l'homme de qualité. Je le vis trois ou quatre fois, et je vis un homme simple, uni, bon, et que me temoignoit une bonté extrême. Si je n'en ai point profité, je l'attribue moins à son caractére qu'à son genre de vie. Il se leve de grand matin, court les ateliers des artistes pendant tout le jour, et rentre chez lui à six heurs du soir pour se mettre en robe de chambre, et s'enfermer dans son cabinet. Le moyen de voir ses amis?

Si ces recommendations etoient steriles, il y en eut d'autres que devinrent aussi fécondes par leurs suites, qu'elles etoient agréables en elles mêmes. Dans une capitale comme Paris, il est nécessaire, il est juste que des lettres de recommendation vous ayent distingué de la foule. Mais dèsque la glace est rompue, vos connoissances se multiplient, et vos nouveaux amis se font un plaisir de vous en procurer d'autres plus nouveaux encore. Heureux effet de ce caractère leger et aimable du François, qui a établi dans Paris une douceur et une liberté dans la société, inconnues à l'antiquité, et encore ignorées des autres nations. A Londres il faut faire son chemin dans les maisons que ne s'ouvrent qu'avec peine. Là on croit vous faire plaisir en vous recevant. Ici on croit s'en faire à soi-meme. Aussi je connois plus de maisons à Paris qu'à Londres: le fait n'est pas vraisemblable, mais il est vrai.

studies of my early youth. Shaping my course through Dijon and Besançon, in the last of which places I was kindly entertained by my cousin Acton, I arrived in the month of May 1763 on the banks of the Leman Lake. It had been my intention to pass the Alps in the autumn, but such are the simple attractions of the place, that the year had almost expired before my departure from Lausanne in the ensuing spring. An absence of five years had not made much alteration in manners or even in persons. My old friends of both sexes hailed my voluntary return—the most genuine proof of my attachment. They had been flattered by the present of my book, the produce of their soil; and the good Pavilliard shed tears of joy as he embraced a pupil whose literary merit he might fairly impute to his own labours. To my old list I added some new acquaintance; and among the strangers I shall distinguish Prince Louis of Wirtemberg, the brother of the reigning Duke, at whose country house, near Lausanne, I frequently dined: a wandering meteor, and at length a falling star, his light and ambitious spirit had successively dropped from the firmament of Prussia, of France, and of Austria; and his faults, which he styled his misfortunes, had driven him into philosophic exile in the Pays de Vaud. He could now moralise on the vanity of the world, the equality of mankind, and the happiness of a private station. His address was affable and polite, and as he had shone in courts and armies, his memory could supply, and his eloquence could adorn, a copious fund of interesting anecdotes. His first enthusiasm was that of charity and agriculture; but the sage gradually lapsed in the saint, and Prince Louis of Wirtemberg is now buried in a hermitage near Mayence, in the last stage of mystic devotion. By some ecclesiastical quarrel, Voltaire had been provoked to withdraw himself from Lausanne, and retire to his castle at Ferney, where I again visited the poet and the actor without seeking his more intimate acquaintance, to which I might now have pleaded a better title. But the theatre which he had founded, the actors whom he had formed, survived the loss of their master; and recent from Paris, I attended with pleasure at the representation of several tragedies

and comedies. I shall not descend to specify particular names and characters; but I cannot forget a private institution which will display the innocent freedom of Swiss manners. My favourite society had assumed, from the age of its members, the proud denomination of the spring (*La Société du Printems*). It consisted of fifteen or twenty young unmarried ladies, of genteel, though not of the very first families; the eldest perhaps about twenty, all agreeable, several handsome, and two or three of exquisite beauty. At each other's houses they assembled almost every day, without the control or even the presence of a mother or an aunt; they were trusted to their own prudence among a crowd of young men of every nation in Europe. They laughed, they sung, they danced, they played at cards, they acted comedies; but in the midst of this careless gaiety they respected themselves, and were respected by the men. The invisible line between liberty and licentiousness was never transgressed by a gesture, a word, or a look, and their virgin chastity was never sullied by the breath of scandal or suspicion. A singular institution, expressive of the innocent simplicity of Swiss manners. After having tasted the luxury of England and Paris, I could not have returned with satisfaction to the coarse and homely table of Madame Pavilliard; nor was her husband offended that I now entered myself as a *pensionaire* or boarder in the elegant house of M. de Mesery, which may be entitled to a short remembrance, as it has stood above twenty years perhaps without a parallel in Europe. The house in which we lodged was spacious and convenient, in the best street, and commanding from behind a noble prospect over the country and the lake. Our table was served with neatness and plenty, the boarders were select, we had the liberty of inviting any guests at a stated price, and in the summer the scene was occasionally transferred to a pleasant villa about a league from Lausanne. The characters of master and mistress were happily suited to each other and to their situation. At the age of seventy-five, Madame de Mesery, who has survived her husband, is still a graceful, I had almost said a handsome woman. She was alike qualified to preside in her kitchen and her drawing-room; and

such was the equal propriety of her conduct, that of two or three hundred foreigners none ever failed in respect, none could complain of her neglect, and none could ever boast of her favour. Mesery himself, of the noble family of De Crousaz, was a man of the world, a jovial companion, whose easy manners and natural sallies maintained the cheerfulness of his house. His wit could laugh at his own ignorance; he disguised, by an air of profusion, a strict attention to his interest; and in this situation he appeared like a nobleman who spent his fortune and entertained his friends. In this agreeable society I resided nearly eleven months (May 1763—April 1764); and in this second visit to Lausanne, among a crowd of my English companions, I knew and esteemed Mr. Holroyd (now Lord Sheffield); and our mutual attachment was renewed and fortified in the subsequent stages of our Italian journey. (Our lives are in the power of chance, and a slight variation on either side, in time or place, might have deprived me of a friend whose activity in the ardour of youth was always prompted by a benevolent heart, and directed by a strong understanding.[1])

[1] *Journal, Septembre* 16, 1763.— . . . et . . . nous ont quitté. Le premier est une méchante bête, grossier, ignorant, et sans usage du monde. Sa violence lui a fait vingt mauvaises affaires ici. On vouloit cependant lui faire entreprendre le voyage d'Italie, mais . . . . refusant de l'y accompagner, on a pris le partie de le rappeler en Angleterre en le faisant passer par Paris. . . . . est philosophe, et fort instruit, mais froid et nullement homme d'esprit. Il est las de courir le monde avec des jeunes foux. Apres avoir rendu celui-ci à sa famille, il compte venir chercher le repos et la retraite dans ce pays. Qu'il a raison!

Septembre 21.—J'ai essuyé une petite mortification au cercle. Le départ de Frey ayant fait vacquer l'emploi de directeur des étrangers, on m'avoit fait entrevoir qu'on me le destinoit, et ma franchise naturelle ne m'avoit pas permis de dissimuler que je le recevrois avec plaisir, et que je m'y attendois. Cependant le pluralité des voix l'a donné à M. Roel Hollandois. J'ai vu qu'on a saisi le premier moment que les loix permettoient de balloter, et que, si j'avois voulu rassembler mes amis, je l'aurois emporté; mais je sais en même tems que je l'aurois eu il y a trois mois, sans y songer un moment. Ma reputation baisse ici avec quelque raison, et j'ai des ennemis.

Septembre 25.—J'ai passé l'après dîner chez Madame de ——. Je ne l'avois pas vue depuis le 14 de ce mois. Elle ne m'a point parlé, ni n'a paru s'etre apperçue de mon absence. Ce silence m'a fait de la peine. J'avois une très belle réputation ici pour les mœurs, mais je vois qu'on commence à me confondre avec mes compatriotes et à me regarder comme un homme qui aime le vin et le désordre.

Octobre 15.—J'ai passé l'après midi chez Madame de Mesery. Elle vouloit me

If my studies at Paris had been confined to the study of the world, three or four months would not have been unprofitably spent. My visits, however superficial, to the Academy of Medals and the public libraries, opened a new field of inquiry; and the

faire rencontrer avec une Demoiselle Françoise qu'elle a prié à souper; cette Demoiselle, qui s'appelle Le Franc, a six pieds de haut. Sa taille, sa figure, son ton, sa conversation, tout annonce le grenadier le plus déterminé, mais un grenadier, qui a de l'esprit, des connoissances, et l'usage du monde. Aussi son sexe, son nom, son état, tout est mystère. Elle se dit Parisienne, fille de condition, qui s'est retirée dans ce pays pour cause de religion. Ne seroit ce pas plûtot pour une affaire d'honneur?

Lausanne, Décembre 16, 1763.—Je me suis levé tard, et une visite fort amicale de M. de Chandieu Villars * m'a enlevé ce qui me restoit de la matinée. M. de Chandieu a servi en France avec distinction, et s'est retiré avec le grade de maréchal de camp. C'est un homme d'une grande politesse, d'un esprit vif et facile; il feroit aujourdhui, à soixante ans, l'agrément d'une société de jeunes filles. C'est presque le seul étranger qui ait pu acquérir l'aisance des maniéres Françoises, sans en prendre en même tems les airs bruyans et étourdis.

Décembre 18.—C'étoit un Dimanche de Communion. Les cérémonies religieuses sont bien entendues dans ce pays. Elles sont rares, et par là même plus respectées; les Viellards se plaignent à la vérité du refroidissement de la dévotion; cependant un jour, comme celui-ci, offre encore un spectacle très édifiant. Point d'affaires, point d'assemblée; on s'interdit jusqu'au whist si nécessaire a l'existence d'un Lausannois.

Décembre 31.—Jettons un coup d'œil sur cette année 1763. Voyons comment j'ai employé cette portion de mon existence qui s'est écoulée et qui ne reviendra plus. Le mois de Janvier s'est passe dans le sein de ma famille à qui il falloit sacrifier tous mes momens, parcequ'ils étoient les derniers dans les soins d'un départ et dans l'embarras d'un voyage. Dans ce voyage cependant je trouvai moyen de lire les lettres de Busbequius, Ministre Imperial à la Porte. Elles sont aussi intéressantes qu'instructives. Je restai à Paris depuis le 28 Janvier jusqu'au 9 Mai. Pendant tout ce tems je n'étudiai point. Les amusements m'occupoient beaucoup, et l'habitude de la dissipation, qu'on prend si facilement dans les grandes villes, ne me permettoient pas de mettre à profit le temps qui me demeuroit. A la verité, si j'ai peu feuilleté les livres, l'observation de tous les objets curieux qui se presentent dans une grande capitale, et la conversation avec les plus grands hommes du siécle, m'ont instruit de beaucoup de choses que je n'aurois point trouvé dans les livres. Les sept ou huit derniers mois de cette année ont été plus tranquilles. Dès que je me suis vu établi à Lausanne, j'ai entrepris une étude suivie sur la géographie ancienne de l'Italie. Mon ardeur s'est très bien soutenue pendant six semaines jusqu'à la fin du mois de Juin. Ce fut alors qu'un voyage de Genève interrompit un peu mon assiduité, que le séjour de Mesery m'offrit mille distractions, et que la société de Saussure acheva de me faire perdre mon tems. Je repris mon travail avec ce Journal au milieu d'Août, et depuis ce tems, jusqu'au commencement de Novembre, j'ai mis a profit tous mes instans; j'avoue que pendant les deux derniers mois mon ardeur s'est un peu rallantie. I. Dans cette étude suivie j'ai lu:

* The father of Madame de Severy, whose family were Mr. Gibbon's most intimate friends, after he had settled at Lausanne in the year 1783.

view of so many manuscripts of different ages and characters induced me to consult the two great Benedictine works, the Diplomatica of Mabillon and the Palæographia of Montfaucon. I studied the theory without attaining the practice of the art:

1. Près de deux livres de la Géographie de Strabon sur l'Italie deux fois. 2. Une partie du deuxiéme livre de l'Histoire Naturelle de Pline. 3. Le quatriéme chapitre du deuxiéme livre de Pomponius Mela. 4. Les Itineraires d'Antonin, et de Jerusalem pour ce qui regarde l'Italie. Je les ai lus avec les Commentaires de Wesseling, &c. J'en ai tiré des tables de toutes les grandes routes de l'Italie, reduisant partout les milles Romains en milles Anglois et en lieues de France, selon les calculs de M. d'Anville. 5. L'Histoire des Grands Chemins de l'Empire Romain, par M. Bergier, deux volumes in 4°. 6. Quelques Extraits choisis de Ciceron, Tite Live, Velleius Paterculus, Tacite, et les deux Plines. La Roma Vetus de Nardini et plusieurs autres opuscules sur le même sujet qui composent presque tout le quatriéme tome du Trésor des Antiquités Romaines de Grævius. 7. L'Italia Antiqua de Cluvier, en deux volumes in folio. 8. L'Iter ou le Voyage de Cl. Rutilius Numatianus dans les Gaules. 9. Les Catalogues de Virgile. 10. Celui de Silius Italicus. 11. Le Voyage d'Horace a Brundusium. *N.B.*—J'ai lu deux fois ces trois derniers morceaux. 12. Le Traité sur les Mesures Itineraires par M. d'Anville, et quelques Mémoires de l'Académie des Belles Lettres. II. On me fit attendre Nardini de la Bibliothèque de Geneve. Je voulus remplir ce moment de vuide par la lecture de Juvenal, poëte qui je ne connoissois encore que de réputation. Je le lu deux fois avec plaisir et avec soin. III. Pendant l'année j'ai lu quelques journaux, entre autres le Journal Étranger depuis son commencement, un tome des Nouvelles de Bayle, et les xxxv premiers volumes de la Bibliotheque raisonnée. IV. J'ai beaucoup ecrit de mon Recueil Géographique de l'Italie qui est deja bien ample et assez curieux. V. Je ne dois point oublier ce journal même qui est devenu un ouvrage ; 214 pages en quatre mois et demi et des pages des mieux fournies sont un objet considerable. Aussi sans compter un grand nombre d'observations détachées, il s'y trouve des dissertations savantes et raisonées. Celle du passage d'Annibal contient dix pages, et celle sur la guerre sociale en a douze. Mais ces morceaux sont trop étendus, et le journal même a besoin d'une reforme qui lui retranche quantité de pieces qui sont assez étrangeres à son veritable plan. Après avoir un peu reflechi là dessus, voici quelques règles que je me suis faites sur les objets qui lui conviennent. I. Toute ma vie civile et privée, mes amusemens, mes liaisons, mes écarts même, et toutes mes réflexions qui ne roulent que sur des sujets qui me sont personels, je conviens que tout cela n'est interessant que pour moi, mais aussi ce n'est que pour moi que j'écris mon journal. II. Tout ce que j'apprens par l'observation ou la conversation. A l'égard de celle-ci je ne rapporterai que ce que je tiens de personnes tout à la fois instruites et véridiques, lorsqu'il est question de faits, ou du petit nombre de ceux qui meritent le titre de grand homme, s'il s'agit de sentimens et d'opinions. III. J'y mettrai soigneusement tout ce qu'on peut appeler la partie materielle de mes études ; combien d'heures j'ai travaillé, combien de pages j'ai écrit ou lu, avec une courte notice du sujet qu'elles contenoient. IV. Je serois faché de lire sans réfléchir sur mes lectures, sans porter des jugemens raisonnés sur mes auteurs, et sans éplucher avec soin leurs idées et leurs expressions. Mais toute lecture ne fournit pas egalement. Il y a des livres qu'on parcourt, et il y en a qu'on lit ; il y en a enfin qu'on doit

nor should I complain of the intricacy of Greek abbreviations and Gothic alphabets, since every day, in a familiar language, I am at a loss to decipher the hieroglyphics of a female note. In a tranquil scene, which revived the memory of my first studies, idleness would have been less pardonable: the public libraries of

étudier. Mes observations sur ceux de la première classe ne peuvent qu'etre courtes et detachées. Elles conviennent au journal. Celles qui regardent la seconde classe n'y entreront qu'autant qu'elles auront le même caractère. V. Mes réflexions sur ce petit nombre d'auteurs classiques, qu'on médite avec soin, seront naturellement plus approfondies et plus suivies. C'est pour elles, et pour des pieces plus étendues et plus originales, aux quelles la lecture ou la méditation peut donner lieu, que je ferai un recueil séparé. Je conserverai cependant sa liaison avec le journal par des renvois constans qui marqueront le numero de chaque piece avec le tems et l'occasion de sa composition. Moyennant ces précautions mon journal ne peut que m'être utile. Ce compte exact de mon tems m'en fera mieux sentir le prix; il dissipera par son detail l'illusion qu'on se fait d'invisager seulement les années et les mois et de mépriser les heures et les jours. Je ne dis rien de l'agrément. C'en est un bien grand cependant de pouvoir repasser chaque epoque de sa vie, et de se placer, dès qu'on le veut, au milieu de toutes les petites scenes qu'on a joué, ou qu'on a vu jouer.

6 *Avril* 1764.—J'ai été eveillé par Pavilliard et H—— pour arrêter une facheuse affaire qui s'etoit passée au bal après notre départ. G—— qui faisoit sa cour a Mademoiselle —— depuis long tems, voyoit avec peine que —— (——) menacoit de le supplanter. Il ne répondoit jamais aux politesses de son rival, que par des brusqueries; et a la fin a l'occasion de la main de Mademoiselle —— il s'emporta contre lui le plus mal à propos du monde, et le traita devant tout le monde *d'impertinent*, &c. J'ai appris de Pavilliard que —— lui avoit envoyé un cartel, et que la reponse de G—— ne l'ayant point contenté iis devoient se rencontrer à cinq heures du soir. Au désespoir de voir mon ami engagé dans une affaire qui ne pouvoit que lui faire du tort, j'ai couru chez M. de Crousaz où demeuroit ——. J'ai bientôt vu qu'il ne lui falloit qu'une explication assez légère, jointe a quelque apologie de la part de G—— pour le désarmer, et je suis retourné chez lui avec H—— pour l'engager a la donner. Nous lui avons fait comprendre que l'aveu d'une veritable tort ne blessoit jamais l'honneur, et que son insulte envers les dames, aussi bien qu'envers ——, étoit sans excuse. Je lui ai dicté un billet convenable, mais sans la moindre bassesse, que j'ai porté au Hollandois. Il a rendu les armes sur le champ, lui a fait la réponse la plus polie, et m'a remercié mille fois du rôle que j'avois fait. En vérité cet homme n'est pas difficile. Après diner j'ai vu nos dames à qui j'ai porté une lettre d'excuses. La mere n'en veut plus a G——, mais Mademoiselle —— est desolée du tort que cette affaire peut lui faire dans le monde. Cette négociation m'a pris le jour entier; mais peut on mieux employer un jour qu'à sauver la vie, peutêtre à deux personnes, et à conserver la réputation d'un ami? Au reste j'ai vu au fond plus d'un caractère. G—— est brave, vrai, et sensé, mais d'une impétuosité qui n'est que plus dangereuse pour être supprimée a l'ordinaire. C—— est d'une étourderie d'enfant. De S—— d'une indifférence qui vient bien plus d'un défaut de sensibilité, que d'un excès de raison. J'ai conçu une véritable amitié pour H——. Il a beaucoup de raison et des sentimens d'honneur avec un cœur des mieux placé.

Lausanne and Geneva liberally supplied me with books; and if many hours were lost in dissipation, many more were employed in literary labour. In the country, Horace and Virgil, Juvenal and Ovid, were my assiduous companions: but in town I formed and executed a plan of study for the use of my Transalpine expedition: the topography of old Rome, the ancient geography of Italy, and the science of medals. 1. I diligently read, almost always with my pen in my hand, the elaborate treatises of Nardini, Donatus, &c., which fill the fourth volume of the Roman Antiquities of Grævius. 2. I next undertook and finished the Italia Antiqua of Cluverius, a learned native of Prussia, who had measured, on foot, every spot, and has compiled and digested every passage of the ancient writers.[1] These passages in Greek or Latin authors I perused in the text of Cluverius, in two folio volumes; but I separately read the descriptions of Italy by Strabo, Pliny, and Pomponius Mela, the Catalogues of the Epic poets, the Itineraries of Wesseling's Antoninus, and the Coasting Voyage of Rutilius Numatianus; and I studied two kindred subjects in the Mesures Itineraires of d'Anville, and the copious work of Bergier, "Histoire des grands Chemins de l'Empire Romain." From these materials I formed a table of roads and distances reduced to our English measure; filled a folio commonplace book with my collections and remarks on the geography of Italy; and inserted in my journal many long and learned notes on the insulæ and populousness of Rome, the social war, the passage of the Alps by Hannibal, &c. 3. After glancing my eye over Addison's agreeable dialogues, I more seriously read the great work of Ezechiel Spanheim, De Præstantiâ et Usû Numismatum, and applied with him the medals of the kings and emperors, the families and colonies, to the illustration of ancient history. And thus was I armed for my Italian journey.[1]

[1] *Journal, Lausanne, Avril* 17, 1764.—Guise et moi, nous avons donné un diner excellent et beaucoup de vin à Dupleix, et à beaucoup d'autres. Après diner nous nous sommes échappés pour faire quelques visites aux ——, aux ——, et aux ——. Je pars avec quelques regrets: cependant un peu de vin, et une gayeté dont je ne pouvois rendre raison, m'ont rendu d'une étourderie sans pareille, vis-a-vis de ces

I shall advance with rapid brevity in the narrative of this tour, in which somewhat more than a year (April 1764—May 1765) was agreeably employed. Content with tracing my line of march, and slightly touching on my personal feelings, I shall wave the minute investigation of the scenes which have been viewed by thousands, and described by hundreds of our modern travellers. Rome is the great object of our pilgrimage; and 1st, the journey; 2nd, the residence; and 3rd, the return, will form the most proper and perspicuous division. 1. I climbed Mont Cenis and descended into the plain of Piedmont, not on the back of an elephant, but on a light osier seat, in the hands of the dexterous and intrepid chairmen of the Alps. The architecture and government of Turin presented the same aspect of tame and tiresome uniformity: but the court was regulated with decent and splendid economy; and I was introduced to his Sardinian majesty Charles

petites. Je leur ai dit cent folies, et nous nous sommes embrassés en riant. Mesery nous a donné un très beau souper avec une partie de la compagnie du matin, augmentée de Bourgeois et de Pavilliard. Ce souper, les adieux sur tout a Pavilliard, que j'aime véritablement, et les préparatifs du départ, m'ont occupé jusqu'a deux heures du matin.

Je quitte Lausanne avec moins de regret que la première fois. Je n'y laisse plus que des connoissances. C'etoit la maitresse et l'ami dont je pleurois la perte. D'aillieurs je voyois Lausanne avec les yeux encore novices d'un jeune homme, qui lui devoit la partie raisonable de son existence, et qui jugeoit sans objets de comparaison. Aujourdhui j'y vois une ville mal batie, au milieu d'un pays delicieux, qui jouit de la paix et du repos, et qui les prend pour la liberté. Un peuple nombreux et bien élevé, qui aime la société qui y est propre, et qui admet avec plaisir les étrangers dans ses coteries, qui seroient bien plus agréables, si la conversation n'avoit pas cédé la place au jeu. Les femmes sont jolies, et malgré leur grande liberté, elles sont très sages. Tout au plus peuvent elles être un peu complaisantes, dans l'idée honnête, mais incertaine, de prendre un étranger dans leurs filets. L'affectation est le péché originel des Lausannois. Affectation de depense, affectation de noblesse, affectation d'esprit: les deux premiéres sont fort repandues, pendant que la troisiéme est fort rare. Comme ce vice se choque a tout instant avec celui des autres, Lausanne se trouve partagée dans un grand nombre d'etats, dont les principes et le langage varient a l'infini, et qui n'ont de commun que leur mepris reciproque les uns pour les autres. Leur gout pour la depense s'accorde mal avec celui de la noblesse. Ils périroient plutôt que de renoncer a leurs grandeurs, ou d'embrasser la seule profession qui puisse les y soutenir. La maison de M. de Mesery est charmante: le caractére franc et genereux du mari, les agrémens de la femme, une situation délicieuse, une chère excellente, la compagnie de ses compatriotes, et une liberté parfaite, font aimer ce séjour a tout Anglois. Que je voudrois en trouver un semblable a Londres! J'y regrette encore Holroyd, mais il nous suit de près.

Emanuel, who, after the incomparable Frederick, held the second rank (proximus longo tamen intervallo) among the kings of Europe. The size and populousness of Milan could not surprise an inhabitant of London; but the fancy is amused by a visit to the Boromean Islands, an enchanted palace, a work of the fairies in the midst of a lake encompassed with mountains, and far removed from the haunts of men. I was less amused by the marble palaces of Genoa than by the recent memorials of her deliverance (in December 1746) from the Austrian tyranny, and I took a military survey of every scene of action within the enclosure of her double walls. My steps were detained at Parma and Modena by the precious relics of the Farnese and Este collections; but, alas! the far greater part had been already transported by inheritance or purchase to Naples and Dresden. By the road of Bologna and the Apennine I at last reached Florence, where I reposed from June to September, during the heat of the summer months. In the gallery, and especially in the tribune, I first acknowledged, at the feet of the Venus of Medicis, that the chisel may dispute the pre-eminence with the pencil, a truth in the fine arts which cannot on this side of the Alps be felt or understood. At home I had taken some lessons of Italian; on the spot I read with a learned native the classics of the Tuscan idiom; but the shortness of my time, and the use of the French language, prevented my acquiring any facility of speaking; and I was a silent spectator in the conversations of our envoy, Sir Horace Mann, whose most serious business was that of entertaining the English at his hospitable table.[1] After leaving Florence, I compared the solitude of Pisa with the industry of Lucca and Leghorn, and continued my journey through Sienna to Rome, where I arrived in the beginning of October. 2. My

[1] *Journal, Florence, Aout* 9, 1764.—Cocchi a diné avec nous. Nous avons beaucoup causé, mais je ne lui trouve pas le genre qu'on lui attribue, c'est peutêtre, parceque les notres ne sont pas analogues. J'entrevois de l'extravagance dans ses idées, de l'affectation dans ses manières. Il se plaint à tout moment de sa pauvreté. Il connoit peu la veritable dignité d'un homme de lettres. S'il a beaucoup de science, elle est bornée à la physique. Il m'a demandé si Lord Spenser ne pouvoit pas faire des éveques, et m'a fait un conte de Lord Lyttelton (dont il ne peut souffrir le fils) ou il étoit question des Parlemens de Campagne.

temper is not very susceptible of enthusiasm; and the enthusiasm which I do not feel, I have ever scorned to affect. But, at the distance of twenty-five years, I can neither forget nor express the strong emotions which agitated my mind as I first approached and entered the eternal city. After a sleepless night, I trod, with a lofty step, the ruins of the Forum; each memorable spot where Romulus stood, or Tully spoke, or Cæsar fell, was at once present to my eye; and several days of intoxication were lost or enjoyed before I could descend to a cool and minute investigation. My guide was Mr. Byers, a Scotch antiquary of experience and taste; but, in the daily labour of eighteen weeks, the powers of attention were sometimes fatigued, till I was myself qualified, in a last review, to select and study the capital works of ancient and modern art. Six weeks were borrowed for my tour of Naples, the most populous of cities, relative to its size, whose luxurious inhabitants seem to dwell on the confines of paradise and hell-fire. I was presented to the boy-king by our new envoy, Sir William Hamilton, who, wisely diverting his correspondence from the Secretary of State to the Royal Society and British Museum, has elucidated a country of such inestimable value to the naturalist and antiquarian. On my return, I fondly embraced, for the last time, the miracles of Rome; but I departed without kissing the feet of Rezzonico (Clement XIII.), who neither possessed the wit of his predecessor Lambertini nor the virtues of his successor Ganganelli. 3. In my pilgrimage from Rome to Loretto I again crossed the Apennine. From the coast of the Adriatic I traversed a fruitful and populous country, which could alone disprove the paradox of Montesquieu that modern Italy is a desert. Without adopting the exclusive prejudice of the natives, I sincerely admire the paintings of the Bologna school. I hastened to escape from the sad solitude of Ferrara, which in the age of Cæsar was still more desolate. The spectacle of Venice afforded some hours of astonishment. The University of Padua is a dying taper, but Verona still boasts her amphitheatre, and his native Vicenza is adorned by the classic architecture of Palladio. The road of Lombardy and Piedmont (did Montesquieu

find them without inhabitants?) led me back to Milan, Turin, and the passage of Mont Cenis, where I again crossed the Alps in my way to Lyons.

The use of foreign travel has been often debated as a general question, but the conclusion must be finally applied to the character and circumstances of each individual. With the education of boys, where or how they may pass over some juvenile years with the least mischief to themselves or others, I have no concern. But after supposing the previous and indispensable requisites of age, judgment, a competent knowledge of men and books, and a freedom from domestic prejudices, I will briefly describe the qualifications which I deem most essential to a traveller. He should be endowed with an active, indefatigable vigour of mind and body, which can seize every mode of conveyance, and support with a careless smile every hardship of the road, the weather, or the inn. The benefits of foreign travel will correspond with the degrees of these qualifications; but in this sketch, those to whom I am known will not accuse me of framing my own panegyric. It was at Rome, on the 15th of October 1764, as I sat musing amidst the ruins of the Capitol, while the barefooted friars were singing vespers in the Temple of Jupiter,[1] that the idea of writing the Decline and Fall of the city first started to my mind. But my original plan was circumscribed to the decay of the city rather than of the empire; and though my reading and reflections began to point towards that object, some years elapsed, and several avocations intervened, before I was seriously engaged in the execution of that laborious work.

I had not totally renounced the southern provinces of France, but the letters which I found at Lyons were expressive of some impatience. Rome and Italy had satiated my curious appetite, and I was now ready to return to the peaceful retreat of my family and books. After a happy fortnight I reluctantly left Paris, embarked at Calais, again landed at Dover, after an interval of two years and five months, and hastily drove through the summer dust and solitude of London. On the 25th of

[1] Now the church of the Zoccolants, or Franciscan Friars.—S.

June 1765 I arrived at my father's house; and the five years ~~and a half~~ between my travels and my father's death (1770) are the portion of my life which I passed with the least enjoyment, and which I remember with the least satisfaction. Every spring I attended the monthly meeting and exercise of the militia at Southamptom; and by the resignation of my father, and the death of Sir Thomas Worsley, I was successively promoted to the rank of major and lieutenant-colonel commandant; but I was each year more disgusted with the inn, the wine, the company, and the tiresome repetition of annual attendance and daily exercise. At home, the economy of the family and farm still maintained the same creditable appearance. My connection with Mrs. Gibbon was mellowed into a warm and solid attachment: my growing years abolished the distance that might yet remain between a parent and a son, and my behaviour satisfied my father, who was proud of the success, however imperfect in his own lifetime, of my literary talents. Our solitude was soon and often enlivened by the visit of the friend of my youth, M. Deyverdun, whose absence from Lausanne I had sincerely lamented. About three years after my first departure, he had emigrated from his native lake to the banks of the Oder in Germany. The *res angusta domi*, the waste of a decent patrimony by an improvident father, obliged him, like many of his countrymen, to confide in his own industry; and he was entrusted with the education of a young prince, the grandson of the Margrave of Schavedt, of the royal family of Prussia. Our friendship was never cooled, our correspondence was sometimes interrupted; but I rather wished than hoped to obtain M. Deyverdun for the companion of my Italian tour. An unhappy, though honourable passion, drove him from his German court; and the attractions of hope and curiosity were fortified by the expectation of my speedy return to England. During four successive summers he passed several weeks or months at Beriton, and our free conversations, on every topic that could interest the heart or understanding, would have reconciled me to a desert or a prison. In the winter months of London my

sphere of knowledge and action was somewhat enlarged by the many new acquaintance which I had contracted in the militia and abroad; and I much regret, as more than an acquaintance, Mr. Godfrey Clarke of Derbyshire, an amiable and worthy young man, who was snatched away by an untimely death. A weekly convivial meeting was established by myself and travellers under the name of the Roman Club.[1]

The renewal, or perhaps the improvement, of my English life was embittered by the alteration of my own feelings. At the age of twenty-one I was, in my proper station of a youth, delivered from the yoke of education, and delighted with the comparative state of liberty and affluence. My filial obedience was natural and easy; and in the gay prospect of futurity my ambition did not extend beyond the enjoyment of my books, my leisure, and my patrimonial estate, undisturbed by the cares of a family and the duties of a profession. But in the militia I was armed with power, in my travels I was exempt from control; and as I approached, as I gradually passed my thirtieth year, I began to feel the desire of being master in my own house. The most gentle authority will sometimes frown without reason, the most cheerful submission will sometimes murmur without cause; and such is the law of our imperfect nature, that we must either command or obey, that our personal liberty is supported by the obsequiousness of our own dependants. While so many of my acquaintance were married or in parliament, or advancing with a rapid step in the various roads of honour and fortune, I stood alone, immovable and insignificant; for after the monthly meeting of 1770 I had even withdrawn myself from the militia, by the resignation of an empty and barren commission. My temper is not susceptible of envy, and the view of successful merit has always excited my warmest applause. The miseries of a vacant life were never known to a man whose hours were insufficient for the inexhaus-

[1] The members were Lord Montstuart (now Earl of Bute), Colonel Edmonstone, Weddal, Palgrave, Lord Berkeley, Godfrey Clarke, Holroyd (Lord Sheffield), Major Ridley, Sir William Guize, Sir John Aubrey, Lord Abingdon, Hon. Peregrine Bertie, Cleaver, Hon. John Damer, Hon. George Damer (Lord Milton), Sir Thomas Gascoigne, Sir John Hort, E. Gibbon.

tible pleasures of study. But I lamented that at the proper age I had not embraced the lucrative pursuits of the law or of trade, the chances of civil office or Indian adventure, or even the fat slumbers of the Church; and my repentance became more lively as the loss of time was more irretrievable. Experience showed me the use of grafting my private consequence on the importance of a great professional body, the benefits of those firm connections which are cemented by hope and interest, by gratitude and emulation, by the mutual exchange of services and favours. From the emoluments of a profession I might have derived an ample fortune or a competent income, instead of being stinted to the same narrow allowance, to be increased only by an event which I sincerely deprecated. The progress and the knowledge of our domestic disorders aggravated my anxiety, and I began to apprehend that I might be left in my old age without the fruits either of industry or inheritance.

In the first summer after my return, whilst I enjoyed at Beriton the society of my friend Deyverdun, our daily conversations expatiated over the field of ancient and modern literature, and we freely discussed my studies, my first Essay, and my future projects. The Decline and Fall of Rome I still contemplated at an awful distance; but the two historical designs which had balanced my choice were submitted to his taste, and in the parallel between the revolutions of Florence and Switzerland, our common partiality for a country which was his by birth and mine by adoption, inclined the scale in favour of the latter. According to the plan, which was soon conceived and digested, I embraced a period of two hundred years, from the association of the three peasants of the Alps to the plenitude and prosperity of the Helvetic body in the sixteenth century. I should have described the deliverance and victory of the Swiss, who have never shed the blood of their tyrants but in a field of battle; the laws and manners of the confederate states; the splendid trophies of the Austrian, Burgundian, and Italian wars; and the wisdom of a nation, who, after some sallies of martial adventure, has been content to guard the blessings of peace with the sword of freedom.

"Manus hæc inimica tyrannis
Ense petit placidam sub libertate quietem."

My judgment as well as my enthusiasm was satisfied with the glorious theme; and the assistance of Deyverdun seemed to remove an insuperable obstacle. The French or Latin memorials, of which I was not ignorant, are inconsiderable in number and weight; but in the perfect acquaintance of my friend with the German language, I found the key of a more valuable collection. The most necessary books were procured. He translated, for my use, the folio volume of Schilling, a copious and contemporary relation of the war of Burgundy. We read and marked the most interesting parts of the great chronicle of Tschudi; and by his labour, or that of an inferior assistant, large extracts were made from the History of Lauffer and the Dictionary of Lew: yet such was the distance and delay, that two years elapsed in these preparatory steps; and it was late in the third summer (1767) before I entered, with these slender materials, on the more agreeable task of composition. A specimen of my History, the first book, was read the following winter in a literary society of foreigners in London; and as the author was unknown, I listened, without observation, to the free strictures and unfavourable sentence of my judges.[1] The momentary sensation was painful; but

[1] Mr. Hume seems to have had a different opinion of this work.

From Mr. HUME *to* Mr. GIBBON.

SIR,—It is but a few days ago since M. Deyverdun put your manuscript into my hands, and I have perused it with great pleasure and satisfaction. I have only one objection, derived from the language in which it is written. Why do you compose in French, and carry faggots into the wood, as Horace says with regard to Romans who wrote in Greek? I grant that you have a like motive to those Romans, and adopt a language much more generally diffused than your native tongue; but have you not remarked the fate of those two ancient languages in following ages? The Latin, though then less celebrated, and confined to more narrow limits, has in some measure outlived the Greek, and is now more generally understood by men of letters. Let the French, therefore, triumph in the present diffusion of their tongue. Our solid and increasing establishments in America, where we need less dread the inundation of barbarians, promise a superior stability and duration to the English language.

Your use of the French tongue has also led you into a style more poetical and figurative, and more highly coloured, than our language seems to admit of in

their condemnation was ratified by my cooler thoughts. I delivered my imperfect sheets to the flames,[1] and for ever renounced a design in which some expense, much labour, and more time had been so vainly consumed. I cannot regret the loss of a slight and superficial essay; for such the work must have been in the hands of a stranger, uninformed by the scholars and statesmen, and remote from the libraries and archives of the Swiss republics. My ancient habits, and the presence of Deyverdun, encouraged me to write in French for the continent of Europe; but I was conscious myself that my style, above prose and below poetry, degenerated into a verbose and turgid declamation. Perhaps I may impute the failure to the injudicious choice of a foreign language. Perhaps I may suspect that the language itself is ill adapted to sustain the vigour and dignity of an important narrative. But if France, so rich in literary merit, had produced a great original historian, his genius would have formed and fixed the idiom to the proper tone, the peculiar mode of historical eloquence.

It was in search of some liberal and lucrative employment that my friend Deyverdun had visited England. His remittances from home were scanty and precarious. My purse was always open, but it was often empty; and I bitterly felt the want of riches and power, which might have enabled me to correct the errors of his fortune. His wishes and qualifications solicited the station of the travelling governor of some wealthy pupil; but

historical productions: for such is the practice of French writers, particularly the more recent ones, who illuminate their pictures more than custom will permit us. On the whole, your History, in my opinion, is written with spirit and judgment; and I exhort you very earnestly to continue it. The objections that occurred to me on reading it were so frivolous, that I shall not trouble you with them, and should, I believe, have a difficulty to recollect them.—I am, with great esteem, Sir, your most obedient, and most humble servant,

(Signed) DAVID HUME.

LONDON, *24th of Oct.* 1767.

[1] He neglected to burn them. He left at Sheffield Place the introduction, or first book, in forty-three pages folio, written in a very small hand, besides a considerable number of notes. If Mr. Gibbon had not declared his judgment, perhaps Mr. Hume's opinion, expressed in the letter in the last note, might have justified the publication of it.—S.

every vacancy provoked so many eager candidates, that for a long time I struggled without success; nor was it till after much application that I could even place him as a clerk in the office of the Secretary of State. In a residence of several years he never acquired the just pronunciation and familiar use of the English tongue, but he read our most difficult authors with ease and taste: his critical knowledge of our language and poetry were such as few foreigners have possessed; and few of our countrymen could enjoy the theatre of Shakespeare and Garrick with more exquisite feeling and discernment. The consciousness of his own strength, and the assurance of my aid, emboldened him to imitate the example of Dr. Maty, whose *Journal Britannique* was esteemed and regretted; and to improve his model, by uniting with the transactions of literature a philosophic view of the arts and manners of the British nation. Our journal for the year 1767, under the title of *Mémoires Littéraires de la Grande Bretagne*, was soon finished and sent to the press. For the first article, Lord Lyttelton's History of Henry II., I must own myself responsible; but the public has ratified my judgment of that voluminous work, in which sense and learning are not illuminated by a ray of genius. The next specimen was the choice of my friend, "The Bath Guide," a light and whimsical performance, of local, and even verbal, pleasantry. I started at the attempt: he smiled at my fears: his courage was justified by success; and a master of both languages will applaud the curious felicity with which he has transfused into French prose the spirit and even the humour of the English verse. It is not my wish to deny how deeply I was interested in these Memoirs, of which I need not surely be ashamed; but at the distance of more than twenty years it would be impossible for me to ascertain the respective shares of the two associates. A long and intimate communication of ideas had cast our sentiments and style in the same mould. In our social labours we composed and corrected by turns; and the praise which I might honestly bestow would fall perhaps on some article or passage most properly my own. A second volume (for the year 1768) was published of these

Memoirs. I will presume to say that their merit was superior to their reputation; but it is not less true that they were productive of more reputation than emolument. They introduced my friend to the protection, and myself to the acquaintance, of the Earl of Chesterfield, whose age and infirmities secluded him from the world; and of Mr. David Hume, who was under-secretary to the office in which Deyverdum was more humbly employed. The former accepted a dedication (April 12, 1769), and reserved the author for the future education of his successor: the latter enriched the journal with a reply to Mr. Walpole's Historical Doubts, which he afterwards shaped into the form of a note. The materials of the third volume were almost completed, when I recommended Deyverdun as governor to Sir Richard Worsley, a youth, the son of my old lieutenant-colonel, who was lately deceased. They set forwards on their travels; nor did they return to England till some time after my father's death.

My next publication was an accidental sally of love and resentment; of my reverence for modest genius, and my aversion for insolent pedantry. The sixth book of the Æneid is the most pleasing and perfect composition of Latin poetry. The descent of Æneas and the Sybil to the infernal regions, to the world of spirits, expands an awful and boundless prospect, from the nocturnal gloom of the Cumæan grot,

> "Ibant obscuri solâ sub nocte per umbram,"

to the meridian brightness of the Elysian fields:

> "Largior hic campos æther et lumine vestit
> Purpureo" ——

from the dreams of simple nature, to the dreams, alas! of Egyptian theology, and the philosophy of the Greeks. But the final dismission of the hero through the ivory gate, whence

> "Falsa ad cœlum mittunt insomnia manes,"

seems to dissolve the whole enchantment, and leaves the reader

in a state of cold and anxious scepticism. This most lame and impotent conclusion has been variously imputed to the taste or irreligion of Virgil; but, according to the more elaborate interpretation of Bishop Warburton, the descent to hell is not a false but a mimic scene, which represents the initiation of Æneas, in the character of a law-giver, to the Eleusinian mysteries. This hypothesis, a singular chapter in the Divine Legation of Moses, had been admitted by many as true; it was praised by all as ingenious; nor had it been exposed in a space of thirty years to a fair and critical discussion. The learning and the abilities of the author had raised him to a just eminence; but he reigned the dictator and tyrant of the world of literature. The real merit of Warburton was degraded by the pride and presumption with which he pronounced his infallible decrees; in his polemic writings he lashed his antagonists without mercy or moderation; and his servile flatterers (see the base and malignant essay on the Delicacy of Friendship), exalting the master critic far above Aristotle and Longinus, assaulted every modest dissenter who refused to consult the oracle and to adore the idol. In a land of liberty such despotism must provoke a general opposition, and the zeal of opposition is seldom candid or impartial. A late professor of Oxford (Dr. Lowth), in a pointed and polished epistle (August 31, 1765), defended himself and attacked the Bishop; and whatsoever might be the merits of an insignificant controversy, his victory was clearly established by the silent confusion of Warburton and his slaves. I too, without any private offence, was ambitious of breaking a lance against the giant's shield; and in the beginning of the year 1770, my Critical Observations on the Sixth Book of the Æneid were sent, without my name, to the press. In this short essay, my first English publication, I aimed my strokes against the person and the hypothesis of Bishop Warburton. I proved, at least to my own satisfaction, that the ancient lawgivers did not invent the mysteries, and that Æneas was never invested with the office of lawgiver; that there is not any argument, any circumstance, which can melt a fable into allegory, or remove the scene from the Lake Avernus to the Temple of

Ceres; that such a wild supposition is equally injurious to the poet and the man; that if Virgil was not initiated he could not, if he were he would not, reveal the secrets of the initiation; that the anathema of Horace (vetabo qui Cereris sacrum vulgarit, &c.) at once attests his own ignorance and the innocence of his friend. As the Bishop of Gloucester and his party maintained a discreet silence, my critical disquisition was soon lost among the pamphlets of the day; but the public coldness was overbalanced to my feelings by the weighty approbation of the last and best editor of Virgil, Professor Heyne of Göttingen, who acquiesces in my confutation, and styles the unknown author, *Doctus . . . et elegantissimus Britannus.* But I cannot resist the temptation of transcribing the favourable judgment of Mr. Hayley, himself a poet and a scholar: "An intricate hypothesis, twisted into a long and laboured chain of quotation and argument, the Dissertation on the Sixth Book of Virgil, remained some time unrefuted. . . . At length a superior but anonymous critic arose, who, in one of the most judicious and spirited essays that our nation has produced on a point of classical literature, completely overturned this ill-founded edifice, and exposed the arrogance and futility of its assuming architect." He even condescends to justify an acrimony of style which had been gently blamed by the more unbiassed German: "Paullo acrius quam velis . . . perstrinxit."[1] But I cannot forgive myself the contemptuous treatment of a man who, with all his faults, was entitled to my esteem;[2] and I can less forgive, in a personal attack, the cowardly concealment of my name and character.

In the fifteen years between my Essay on the Study of Litera-

[1] The editor of the Warburtonian tracts, Dr. Parr (p. 192), considers the allegorical interpretation "as completely refuted in a most clear, elegant, and decisive work of criticism, which could not, indeed, derive authority from the greatest name, but to which the greatest name might with propriety have been affixed."

[2] The Divine Legation of Moses is a monument, already crumbling in the dust, of the vigour and weakness of the human mind. If Warburton's new argument proved anything, it would be a demonstration against the legislator, who left his people without the knowledge of a future state. But some episodes of the work, on the Greek philosophy, the hieroglyphics of Egypt, &c., are entitled to the praise of learning, imagination, and discernment.

ture" and the first volume of the "Decline and Fall" (1761–76), this criticism on Warburton, and some articles in the Journal, were my sole publications. It is more especially incumbent on me to mark the employment, or to confess the waste of time, from my travels to my father's death, an interval in which I was not diverted by any professional duties from the labours and pleasures of a studious life. 1. As soon as I was released from the fruitless task of the Swiss Revolutions (1768), I began gradually to advance from the wish to the hope, from the hope to the design, from the design to the execution, of my historical work, of whose limits and extent I had yet a very inadequate notion. The classics, as low as Tacitus, the younger Pliny, and Juvenal, were my old and familiar companions. I insensibly plunged into the ocean of the Augustan history, and in the descending series I investigated, with my pen almost always in my hand, the original records, both Greek and Latin, from Dion Cassius to Ammianus Marcellinus, from the reign of Trajan to the last age of the Western Cæsars. The subsidiary rays of medals and inscriptions, of geography and chronology, were thrown on their proper objects; and I applied the collections of Tillemont, whose inimitable accuracy almost assumes the character of genius, to fix and arrange within my reach the loose and scattered atoms of historical information. Through the darkness of the Middle Ages I explored my way in the Annals and Antiquities of Italy of the learned Muratori; and diligently compared them with the parallel or transverse lines of Sigonius and Maffei, Pagi, and Pagi, till I almost grasped the ruins of Rome in the fourteenth century, without suspecting that this final chapter must be attained by the labour of six quartos and twenty years. Among the books which I purchased, the Theodosian Code, with the commentary of James Godefroy, must be gratefully remembered. I used it (and much I used it) as a work of history rather than of jurisprudence; but in every light it may be considered as a full and capacious repository of the political state of the Empire in the fourth and fifth centuries. As I believed, and as I still believe, that the propagation of the Gospel and the triumph of the Church are inseparably connected

with the decline of the Roman monarchy. I weighed the causes and effects of the revolution, and contrasted the narratives and apologies of the Christians themselves with the glances of candour or enmity which the Pagans have cast on the rising sects. The Jewish and heathen testimonies, as they are collected and illustrated by Dr. Lardner, directed, without superseding, my search of the originals; and in an ample dissertation on the miraculous darkness of the Passion, I privately drew my conclusions from the silence of an unbelieving age. I have assembled the preparatory studies directly or indirectly relative to my History; but in strict equity they must be spread beyond this period of my life, over the two summers (1771 and 1772) that elapsed between my father's death and my settlement in London. 2. In a free conversation with books and men, it would be endless to enumerate the names and characters of all who are introduced to our acquaintance; but in this general acquaintance we may select the degrees of friendship and esteem according to the wise maxim, "Multum legere potius quam multa." I reviewed again and again the immortal works of the French and English, the Latin and Italian classics. My Greek studies (though less assiduous than I designed) maintained and extended my knowledge of that incomparable idiom. Homer and Xenophon were still my favourite authors, and I had almost prepared for the press an essay on the Cyropædia, which in my own judgment is not unhappily laboured. After a certain age, the new publications of merit are the sole food of the many, and the most austere student will be often tempted to break the line for the sake of indulging his own curiosity and of providing the topics of fashionable currency. A more respectable motive may be assigned for the third perusal of Blackstone's Commentaries, and a copious and critical abstract of that English work was my first serious production in my native language. 3. My literary leisure was much less complete and independent than it might appear to the eye of a stranger. In the hurry of London I was destitute of books; in the solitude of Hampshire I was not master of my time. My quiet was gradually disturbed by our domestic anxiety,

and I should be ashamed of my unfeeling philosophy had I found much time or taste for study in the last fatal summer (1770) of my father's decay and dissolution.

The disembodying of the militia at the close of the war (1763) had restored the Major (a new Cincinnatus) to a life of agriculture. His labours were useful, his pleasures innocent, his wishes moderate; and my father *seemed* to enjoy the state of happiness which is celebrated by poets and philosophers as the most agreeable to nature and the least accessible to fortune.

> "Beatus ille, qui procul negotiis
> (Ut prisca gens mortalium)
> Paterna rura bubus exercet suis,
> Solutus omni fœnore."[1]—HOR., *Epod.* ii.

But the last indispensable condition, the freedom from debt, was wanting to my father's felicity; and the vanities of his youth were severely punished by the solicitude and sorrow of his declining age. The first mortgage, on my return from Lausanne (1758), had afforded him a partial and transient relief. The annual demand of interest and allowance was a heavy deduction from his income; the militia was a source of expense; the farm in his hands was not a profitable adventure; he was loaded with the costs and damages of an obsolete lawsuit, and each year multiplied the number and exhausted the patience of his creditors. Under these painful circumstances, I consented to an additional mortgage, to the sale of Putney, and to every sacrifice that could alleviate his distress. But he was no longer capable of a rational effort; and his reluctant delays postponed not the evils themselves, but the remedies of those evils ("remedia malorum potius quam mala differebat"). The pangs of shame, tenderness, and self-reproach incessantly preyed on his vitals; his constitution was broken, he lost his strength and his sight, the rapid progress

[1] "Like the first mortals, blest is he,
From debts, and usury, and business free,
With his own team who ploughs the soil
Which grateful once confessed his father's toil."—FRANCIS.

of a dropsy admonished him of his end, and he sunk into the grave on the 10th of November 1770, in the sixty-fourth year of his age. A family tradition insinuates that Mr. William Law had drawn his pupil in the light and inconstant character of Flatus, who is ever confident and ever disappointed in the chase of happiness. But these constitutional failings were happily compensated by the virtues of the head and heart, by the warmest sentiments of honour and humanity. His graceful person, polite address, gentle manners, and unaffected cheerfulness, recommended him to the favour of every company; and in the change of times and opinions his liberal spirit had long since delivered him from the zeal and prejudice of a Tory education. I submitted to the order of Nature, and my grief was soothed by the conscious satisfaction that I had discharged all the duties of filial piety.

As soon as I had paid the last solemn duties to my father, and obtained from time and reason a tolerable composure of mind, I began to form the plan of an independent life most adapted to my circumstances and inclination. Yet so intricate was the net, my efforts were so awkward and feeble, that nearly two years (November 1770—October 1772) were suffered to elapse before I could disentangle myself from the management of the farm and transfer my residence from Beriton to a house in London. During this interval I continued to divide my year between town and the country; but my new situation was brightened by hope, my stay in London was prolonged into the summer, and the uniformity of the summer was occasionally broken by visits and excursions at a distance from home. The gratification of my desires (they were not immoderate) has been seldom disappointed by the want of money or credit; my pride was never insulted by the visit of an importunate tradesman, and my transient anxiety for the past or future has been dispelled by the studious or social occupation of the present hour. My conscience does not accuse me of any act of extravagance or injustice, and the remnant of my estate affords an ample and honourable provision for my declining age. I shall not expatiate on my economical affairs, which cannot be instructive or amusing to the reader. It is a rule of

prudence, as well as of politeness, to reserve such confidence for the ear of a private friend, without exposing our situation to the envy or pity of strangers; for envy is productive of hatred and pity borders too nearly on contempt. Yet I may believe, and even assert, that in circumstances more indigent or more wealthy I should never have accomplished the task or acquired the fame of an historian; that my spirit would have been broken by poverty and contempt, and that my industry might have been relaxed in the labour and luxury of a superfluous fortune.

I had now attained the first of earthly blessings—independence. I was the absolute master of my hours and actions; nor was I deceived in the hope that the establishment of my library in town would allow me to divide the day between study and society. Each year the circle of my acquaintance, the number of my dead and living companions was enlarged. To a lover of books the shops and sales of London present irresistible temptations, and the manufacture of my history required a various and growing stock of materials. The militia, my travels, the House of Commons, the fame of an author, contributed to multiply my connections. I was chosen a member of the fashionable clubs; and before I left England in 1783 there were few persons of any eminence in the literary or political world to whom I was a stranger.[1] It would most assuredly be in my power to amuse the reader with a gallery of portraits and a collection of anecdotes. But I have always condemned the practice of transforming a private memorial into a vehicle of satire or praise. By my own choice I passed in town the greatest part of the year; but whenever I was desirous of breathing the air of the country, I possessed an hospitable retreat at Sheffield Place, in Sussex, in the family of my valuable friend,

[1] From the mixed though polite company of Boodle's, White's, and Brooke's I must honourably distinguish a weekly society which was instituted in the year 1764, and which still continues to flourish, under the title of the Literary Club (Hawkins's "Life of Johnson," p. 415; Boswell's "Tour to the Hebrides," p. 97). The names of Dr. Johnson, Mr. Burke, Mr. Topham Beauclerc, Mr. Garrick, Dr. Goldsmith, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Mr. Colman, Sir William Jones, Dr. Percy, Mr. Fox, Mr. Sheridan, Mr. Adam Smith, Mr. Steevens, Mr. Dunning, Sir Joseph Banks, Dr. Warton, and his brother, Mr. Thomas Warton, Dr. Burney, &c., form a large and luminous constellation of British stars.

Mr. Holroyd, whose character, under the name of Lord Sheffield, has since been more conspicuous to the public.

No sooner was I settled in my house and library, than I undertook the composition of the first volume of my History. At the outset all was dark and doubtful; even the title of the work, the true era of the "Decline and Fall of the Empire," the limits of the introduction, the division of the chapters, and the order of the narrative; and I was often tempted to cast away the labour of seven years. The style of an author should be the image of his mind, but the choice and command of language is the fruit of exercise. Many experiments were made before I could hit the middle tone between a dull chronicle and a rhetorical declamation: three times did I compose the first chapter, and twice the second and third, before I was tolerably satisfied with their effect. In the remainder of the way I advanced with a more equal and easy pace; but the fifteenth and sixteenth chapters have been reduced, by three successive revisals, from a large volume to their present size; and they might still be compressed without any loss of facts or sentiments. An opposite fault may be imputed to the concise and superficial narrative of the first reigns from Commodus to Alexander; a fault of which I have never heard, except from Mr. Hume in his last journey to London. Such an oracle might have been consulted and obeyed with rational devotion; but I was soon disgusted with the modest practice of reading the manuscript to my friends. Of such friends some will praise from politeness, and some will criticise from vanity. The author himself is the best judge of his own performance; no one has so deeply meditated on the subject; no one is so sincerely interested in the event.

By the friendship of Mr. (now Lord) Eliot, who had married my first cousin, I was returned at the general election for the borough of Liskeard. I took my seat at the beginning of the memorable contest between Great Britain and America, and supported, with many a sincere and silent vote, the rights, though not perhaps the interest, of the mother country. After a fleeting illusive hope, prudence condemned me to acquiesce in the

humble station of a mute. I was not armed by Nature and education with the intrepid energy of mind and voice—

"Vincentem strepitus, et natum rebus agendis."

Timidity was fortified by pride, and even the success of my pen discouraged the trial of my voice.[1] But I assisted at the debates of a free assembly; I listened to the attack and defence of eloquence and reason; I had a near prospect of the characters, views, and passions of the first men of the age. The cause of Government was ably vindicated by Lord North, a statesman of spotless integrity, a consummate master of debate, who could wield with equal dexterity the arms of reason and of ridicule. He was seated on the Treasury bench between his Attorney and Solicitor General, the two pillars of the law and state, *magis pares quam similes;* and the Minister might indulge in a short slumber, whilst he was upholden on either hand by the majestic sense of Thurlow and the skilful eloquence of Wedderburne. From the adverse side of the House an ardent and powerful opposition was supported by the lively declamation of Barré, the legal acuteness of Dunning, the profuse and philosophic fancy of Burke, and the argumentative vehemence of Fox, who in the conduct of a party approved himself equal to the conduct of an empire. By such men every operation of peace and war, every principle of justice or policy, every question of authority and freedom, was attacked and defended; and the subject of the momentous contest was the union or separation of Great Britain and America. The eight sessions that I sat in parliament were a school of civil prudence, the first and most essential virtue of an historian.

[1] A French sketch of Mr. Gibbon's life, written by himself, probably for the use of some foreign journalist or translator, contains no fact not mentioned in his English Life. He there describes himself with his usual candour. "Depuis huit ans il a assisté aux deliberations les plus importantes, mais il ne s'est jamais trouvé *le courage*, ni *le talent*, de parler dans une assemblée publique." This sketch was written before the publication of his three last volumes, as in closing it he says of his History: "Cette entreprise lui demande encore plusieurs années d'une application soutenue; mais quelqu'en soit le succès, il trouve dans cette application même un plaisir toujours varié et toujours renaissant."

The volume of my History, which had been somewhat delayed by the novelty and tumult of a first session, was now ready for the press. After the perilous adventure had been declined by my friend Mr. Elmsly, I agreed, upon easy terms, with Mr. Thomas Cadell, a respectable bookseller, and Mr. William Strahan, an eminent printer; and they undertook the care and risk of the publication, which derived more credit from the name of the shop than from that of the author. The last revisal of the proofs was submitted to my vigilance; and many blemishes of style, which had been invisible in the manuscript, were discovered and corrected in the printed sheet. So moderate were our hopes, that the original impression had been stinted to five hundred, till the number was doubled by the prophetic taste of Mr. Strahan. During this awful interval I was neither elated by the ambition of fame nor depressed by the apprehension of contempt. My diligence and accuracy were attested by my own conscience. History is the most popular species of writing, since it can adapt itself to the highest or the lowest capacity. I had chosen an illustrious subject. Rome is familiar to the school-boy and the statesman; and my narrative was deduced from the last period of classical reading. I had likewise flattered myself that an age of light and liberty would receive without scandal an inquiry into the human causes of the progress and establishment of Christianity.

I am at a loss how to describe the success of the work without betraying the vanity of the writer. The first impression was exhausted in a few days; a second and third edition were scarcely adequate to the demand; and the bookseller's property was twice invaded by the pirates of Dublin. My book was on every table, and almost on every toilette; the historian was crowned by the taste or fashion of the day; nor was the general voice disturbed by the barking of any profane critic. The favour of mankind is most freely bestowed on a new acquaintance of any original merit; and the mutual surprise of the public and their favourite is productive of those warm sensibilities which at a second meeting can no longer be rekindled. If I listened to the music

of praise, I was more seriously satisfied with the approbation of my judges. The candour of Dr. Robertson embraced his disciple; a letter from Mr. Hume overpaid the labour of ten years; but I have never presumed to accept a place in the triumvirate of British historians.

That curious and original letter will amuse the reader, and his gratitude should shield my free communication from the reproach of vanity:—

"EDINBURGH, *18th March* 1776.

"DEAR SIR,—As I ran through your volume of history with great avidity and impatience, I cannot forbear discovering somewhat of the same impatience in returning you thanks for your agreeable present, and expressing the satisfaction which the performance has given me. Whether I consider the dignity of your style, the depth of your matter, or the extensiveness of your learning, I must regard the work as equally the object of esteem; and I own that if I had not previously had the happiness of your personal acquaintance, such a performance from an Englishman in our age would have given me some surprise. You may smile at this sentiment; but as it seems to me that your countrymen, for almost a whole generation, have given themselves up to barbarous and absurd faction, and have totally neglected all polite letters, I no longer expected any valuable production ever to come from them. I know it will give you pleasure (as it did me) to find that all the men of letters in this place concur in their admiration of your work, and in their anxious desire of your continuing it.

"When I heard of your undertaking (which was some time ago), I own I was a little curious to see how you would extricate yourself from the subject of your two last chapters. I think you have observed a very prudent temperament; but it was impossible to treat the subject so as not to give grounds of suspicion against you, and you may expect that a clamour will arise. This, if anything, will retard your success with the public, for in every other respect your work is calculated to be popular. But among many other marks of decline, the prevalence of superstition in England

prognosticates the fall of philosophy and decay of taste; and though nobody be more capable than you to revive them, you will probably find a struggle in your first advances.

"I see you entertain great doubt with regard to the authenticity of the poems of Ossian. You are certainly right in so doing. It is indeed strange that any men of sense could have imagined it possible that above twenty thousand verses, along with numberless historical facts, could have been preserved by oral tradition during fifty generations by the rudest, perhaps, of all the European nations, the most necessitous, the most turbulent, and the most unsettled. Where a supposition is so contrary to common sense, any positive evidence of it ought never to be regarded. Men run with great avidity to give their evidence in favour of what flatters their passions and their national prejudices. You are therefore over and above indulgent to us in speaking of the matter with hesitation.

"I must inform you that we are all very anxious to hear that you have fully collected the materials for your second volume, and that you are even considerably advanced in the composition of it. I speak this more in the name of my friends than in my own, as I cannot expect to live so long as to see the publication of it. Your ensuing volume will be more delicate than the preceding, but I trust in your prudence for extricating you from the difficulties; and in all events, you have the courage to despise the clamour of bigots. I am, with great regard, dear sir, your most obedient and most humble servant, DAVID HUME."

Some weeks afterwards I had the melancholy pleasure of seeing Mr. Hume in his passage through London, his body feeble, his mind firm. On the 25th of August of the same year (1776) he died at Edinburgh the death of a philosopher.

My second excursion to Paris was determined by the pressing invitation of M. and Madame Necker, who had visited England in the preceding summer. On my arrival, I found M. Necker Director-General of the finances, in the first bloom of power and popularity. His private fortune enabled him to support a liberal

establishment; and his wife, whose talents and virtues I had long admired, was admirably qualified to preside in the conversation of her table and drawing-room. As their friend, I was introduced to the best company of both sexes; to the foreign ministers of all nations, and to the first names and characters of France, who distinguished me by such marks of civility and kindness as gratitude will not suffer me to forget and modesty will not allow me to enumerate. The fashionable suppers often broke into the morning hours; yet I occasionally consulted the Royal Library and that of the Abbey of St. Germain, and in the free use of their books at home I had always reason to praise the liberality of those institutions. The society of men of letters I neither courted nor declined; but I was happy in the acquaintance of M. de Buffon, who united with a sublime genius the most amiable simplicity of mind and manners. At the table of my old friend, M. de Foncemagne, I was involved in a dispute with the Abbé de Mably, and his jealous irascible spirit revenged itself on a work which he was incapable of reading in the original.

As I might be partial in my own cause, I shall transcribe the words of an unknown critic, observing only that this dispute had been preceded by another on the English constitution at the house of the Countess de Froulay, an old Jansenist lady.

"Vous étiez chez M. de Foncemagne, mon cher Theodon, le jour que M. l'Abbé de Mably et M. Gibbon y dinerent en grande compagnie. La conversation roula presque entièrement sur l'histoire. L'Abbé etant un profond politique, la tourna sur l'administration, quand on fut au dessert; et comme par caractère, par humeur, par l'habitude d'admirer Tite Live, il ne prise que le système républicain, il se mit à vanter l'excellence des républiques, bien persuadé que le savant Anglois l'approuveroit en tout, et admireroit la profondeur de génie qui avoit fait deviner tous ces avantages à un François. Mais M. Gibbon, instruit par l'expérience des inconveniens d'un gouvernement populaire, ne fut point du tout de son avis, et il prit généreusement la défense du gouvernement monarchique. L'Abbé voulut le convaincre par Tite

Live, et par quelques argumens tirés de Plutarque en faveur des Spartiates. M. Gibbon, doué de la mémoire la plus heureuse, et ayant tous les faits presens à la pensée, domina bien-tot la conversation; l'Abbé se facha, il s'emporta, il dit des choses dures; l'Anglois, conservant le phlegme de son pays, prenoit ses advantages, et pressoit l'Abbé avec d'autant plus de succès que la colère le troubloit de plus en plus. La conversation s'échauffoit, et M. de Foncemagne la rompit en se levant de table, et en passant dans le salon, où personne ne fut tenté de la renouer."—*Supplément de la Manière d'écrire l'Histoire*, p. 125, &c.[1]

Nearly two years had elapsed between the publication of my first and the commencement of my second volume, and the causes must be assigned to this long delay. 1. After a short holiday, I indulged my curiosity in some studies of a very different nature, a course of anatomy, which was demonstrated by Dr. Hunter; and some lessons of chemistry, which were delivered by Mr. Higgins. The principles of these sciences, and a taste for books of natural history, contributed to multiply my ideas and images; and the anatomist and chemist may sometimes track me in their own snow. 2. I dived, perhaps too deeply, into the mud of the Arian controversy, and many days of reading, thinking, and writing were consumed in the pursuit of a phantom. 3. It is difficult to arrange, with order and perspicuity, the various transactions of the age of Constantine; and so much was I displeased

[1] Of the voluminous writings of the Abbé de Mably (see his Éloge by the Abbé Brizard), the "Principes du droit public de l'Europe," and the first part of the "Observations sur l'Histoire de France," may be deservedly praised; and even the "Manière d'écrire l'Histoire" contains several useful precepts and judicious remarks. Mably was a lover of virtue and freedom; but his virtue was austere, and his freedom was impatient of an equal. Kings, magistrates, nobles, and successful writers were the objects of his contempt, or hatred, or envy; but his illiberal abuse of Voltaire, Hume, Buffon, the Abbé Reynal, Dr. Robertson, and *tutti quanti*, can be injurious only to himself.

"Est il rien de plus fastidieux (says the polite censor) qu'un M. Gibbon; qui dans son eternelle 'Histoire des Empereurs Romains,' suspend à chaque instant son insipide et lente narration, pour vous expliquer la cause de faits que vous allez lire."—*Manière d'écrire l'Histoire*, p. 184. (See another passage, p. 280.) Yet I am indebted to the Abbé de Mably for two such advocates as the anonymous French critic and my friend Mr. Hayley. (Hayley's Works, 8vo edit., vol. ii. pp. 261-263.)

with the first essay, that I committed to the flames above fifty sheets. 4. The six months of Paris and pleasure must be deducted from the account. But when I resumed my task, I felt my improvement. I was now master of my style and subject; and while the measure of my daily performance was enlarged, I discovered less reason to cancel or correct. It has always been my practice to cast a long paragraph in a single mould, to try it by my ear, to deposit it in my memory, but to suspend the action of the pen till I had given the last polish to my work. Shall I add, that I never found my mind more vigorous nor my composition more happy than in the winter hurry of society and parliament?

Had I believed that the majority of English readers were so fondly attached even to the name and shadow of Christianity—had I foreseen that the pious, the timid, and the prudent would feel, or affect to feel, with such exquisite sensibility—I might perhaps have softened the two invidious chapters, which would create many enemies and conciliate few friends. But the shaft was shot, the alarm was sounded, and I could only rejoice that if the voice of our priests was clamorous and bitter, their hands were disarmed from the powers of persecution. I adhered to the wise resolution of trusting myself and my writings to the candour of the public till Mr. Davies of Oxford presumed to attack, not the faith, but the fidelity of the historian. My "Vindication," expressive of less anger than contempt, amused for a moment the busy and idle metropolis; and the most rational part of the laity, and even of the clergy, appear to have been satisfied of my innocence and accuracy. I would not print this "Vindication" in quarto, lest it should be bound and preserved with the History itself. At the distance of twelve years, I calmly affirm my judgment of Davies, Chelsum, &c. A victory over such antagonists was a sufficient humiliation. They, however, were rewarded in this world. Poor Chelsum was indeed neglected, and I dare not boast the making Dr. Watson a bishop—he is a prelate of a large mind and liberal spirit; but I enjoyed the pleasure of giving a royal pension to Mr. Davies, and of collating Dr. Apthorpe to an archiepiscopal

living. Their success encouraged the zeal of Taylor the Arian,[1] and Milner the Methodist,[2] with many others whom it would be difficult to remember and tedious to rehearse. The list of my adversaries, however, was graced with the more respectable names of Dr. Priestley, Sir David Dalrymple, and Dr. White; and every polemic of either University discharged his sermon or pamphlet against the impenetrable silence of the Roman historian. In his "History of the Corruptions of Christianity," Dr. Priestley threw down his two gauntlets to Bishop Hurd and Mr. Gibbon. I declined the challenge in a letter, exhorting my opponent to enlighten the world by his philosophical discoveries, and to remember that the merit of his predecessor Servetus is now reduced to a single passage, which indicates the smaller circulation of the blood through the lungs from and to the heart.[3] Instead of listening to this friendly advice, the dauntless philosopher of Birmingham continued to fire away his double battery against those who believed too little and those who believed too much. From *my* replies he has nothing to hope or fear; but his Socinian shield has repeatedly been pierced by the spear of Horsley, and his trumpet of sedition may at length awaken the magistrates of a free country.

The profession and rank of Sir David Dalrymple (now a Lord of Session) has given a more decent colour to his style. But he scrutinised each separate passage of the two chapters with the dry minuteness of a special pleader; and as he was always solicitous to make, he may have succeeded sometimes in finding, a flaw. In his "Annals of Scotland" he has shown himself a diligent collector and an accurate critic.

[1] The stupendous title, "Thoughts on the Causes of the Grand Apostacy," at first agitated my nerves, till I discovered that it was the apostacy of the whole Church, since the Council of Nice, from Mr. Taylor's private religion. His book is a thorough mixture of *high* enthusiasm and *low* buffoonery, and the Millennium is a fundamental article of his creed.

[2] From his grammar-school at Kingston-upon-Hull, Mr. Joseph Milner pronounces an anathema against all rational religion. *His* faith is a divine taste, a spiritual inspiration; *his* Church is a mystic and invisible body: the *natural* Christians, such as Mr. Locke, who believe and interpret the Scriptures, are in his judgment no better than profane infidels.

[3] "Astruc de la Structure du Cœur," tom. i. pp. 77, 79.

I have praised, and I still praise, the eloquent sermons which were preached in St. Mary's pulpit at Oxford by Dr. White. If he assaulted me with some degree of illiberal acrimony, in such a place, and before such an audience, he was obliged to speak the language of the country. I smiled at a passage in one of his private letters to Mr. Badcock: "The part where we encounter Gibbon must be brilliant and striking."

In a sermon preached before the University of Cambridge, Dr. Edwards complimented a work, "which can only perish with the language itself;" and esteems the author a formidable enemy. He is, indeed, astonished that more learning and ingenuity has not been shown in the defence of Israel; that the prelates and dignitaries of the Church (alas, good man!) did not vie with each other whose stone should sink the deepest in the forehead of this Goliah.

"But the force of truth will oblige us to confess, that in the attacks which have been levelled against our sceptical historian, we can discover but slender traces of profound and exquisite erudition, of solid criticism and accurate investigation; but we are too frequently disgusted by vague and inconclusive reasoning, by unseasonable banter and senseless witticisms, by embittered bigotry and enthusiastic jargon, by futile cavils and illiberal invectives. Proud and elated by the weakness of his antagonists, he condescends not to handle the sword of controversy." [1]

Let me frankly own that I was startled at the first discharge of ecclesiastical ordnance; but as soon as I found that this empty noise was mischievous only in the intention, my fear was converted into indignation; and every feeling of indignation or curiosity has long since subsided in pure and placid indifference.

The prosecution of my history was soon afterwards checked by another controversy of a very different kind. At the request of the Lord Chancellor and of Lord Weymouth, then Secretary of State, I vindicated against the French manifesto the justice of the British arms. The whole correspondence of Lord Stormont, our late ambassador at Paris, was submitted to my inspection,

[1] *Monthly Review*, October 1790.

and the "Mémoire Justificatif" which I composed in French was first approved by the Cabinet Ministers, and then delivered as a state paper to the courts of Europe. The style and manner are praised by Beaumarchais himself, who, in his private quarrel, attempted a reply; but he flatters me by ascribing the memoir to Lord Stormont; and the grossness of his invective betrays the loss of temper and of wit. He acknowledged[1] that "le style ne seroit pas sans grace, ni la logique sans justesse," &c., if the facts were true, which he undertakes to disprove. For these facts my credit is not pledged; I spoke as a lawyer from my brief; but the veracity of Beaumarchais may be estimated from the assertion that France, by the treaty of Paris (1763), was limited to a certain number of ships of war. On the application of the Duke of Choiseul, he was obliged to retract his daring falsehood.

Among the honourable connections which I had formed, I may justly be proud of the friendship of Mr. Wedderburne, at that time Attorney-General, who now illustrates the title of Lord Loughborough and the office of Chief Justice of the Common Pleas. By his strong recommendation and the favourable disposition of Lord North, I was appointed one of the Lords Commissioners of Trade and Plantations; and my private income was enlarged by a clear addition of between £700 and £800 a year. The fancy of an hostile orator may paint in the strong colours of ridicule "the perpetual virtual adjournment and the unbroken fitting vacation of the Board of Trade;"[2] but it must be allowed that our duty was not tolerably severe, and that I enjoyed many days and weeks of repose, without being called away from my library to the office. My acceptance of a place provoked some of the leaders of Opposition, with whom I had lived in habits of

[1] Œuvres de Beaumarchais, tom. iii. pp. 299, 355.

[2] I can never forget the delight with which that diffusive and ingenious orator, Mr. Burke, was heard by all sides of the House, and even by those whose existence he proscribed. (See Mr. Burke's speech on the Bill of Reform, pp. 72–80.) The Lords of Trade blushed at their insignificancy, and Mr. Eden's appeal to the two thousand five hundred volumes of our reports served only to excite a general laugh. I take this opportunity of certifying the correctness of Mr. Burke's printed speeches, which I have heard and read.

intimacy; and I was most unjustly accused of deserting a party in which I had never enlisted.[1]

The aspect of the next session of parliament was stormy and perilous; county meetings, petitions, and committees of correspondence announced the public discontent; and instead of voting with a triumphant majority, the friends of government were often exposed to a struggle, and sometimes to a defeat. The House of Commons adopted Mr. Dunning's motion, "That the influence of the Crown had increased, was increasing, and ought to be diminished;" and Mr. Burke's bill of reform was framed with skill, introduced with eloquence, and supported by numbers. Our late president, the American Secretary of State, very narrowly

[1] *From* EDWARD GIBBON, Esq., *to* —— Esq.

and July 1779.

DEAR SIR,—Yesterday I received a very interesting communication from my friend, whose kind and honourable behaviour towards me I must always remember with the highest gratitude. He informed me that, in consequence of an arrangement, a place at the Board of Trade was reserved for me, and that as soon as I signified my acceptance of it, he was satisfied no further difficulties would arise. My answer to him was sincere and explicit. I told him that I was far from approving all the past measures of the administration, even some of those in which I myself had silently concurred; that I saw, with the rest of the world, many capital defects in the characters of some of the present ministers, and was sorry that in so alarming a situation of public affairs, the country had not the assistance of several able and honest men who are now in opposition. But that I had not formed with any of those persons in opposition any engagements or connections which could in the least restrain or affect my parliamentary conduct; that I could not discover among them such superior advantages, either of measures or of abilities, as could make me consider it as a duty to attach myself to their cause; and that I clearly understood, from the public and private language of ——, one of their leaders, that in the actual state of the country, he himself was seriously of opinion that opposition could not tend to any good purpose, and might be productive of much mischief; that, for those reasons, I saw no objections which could prevent me from accepting an office under the present government, and that I was ready to take a step which I found to be consistent both with my interest and my honour.

It must now be decided whether I may continue to live in England or whether I must soon withdraw myself into a kind of philosophical exile in Switzerland. My father left his affairs in a state of embarrassment, and even of distress. My attempts to dispose of a part of my landed property have hitherto been disappointed, and are not likely at present to be more successful; and my plan of expense, though moderate in itself, deserves the name of extravagance, since it exceeds my real income. The addition of the salary which is now offered will make my situation perfectly easy; but I hope you will do me the justice to believe that my mind could not be so, unless I were satisfied of the rectitude of my own conduct.

escaped the sentence of proscription; but the unfortunate Board of Trade was abolished in the committee by a small majority (207 to 199) of eight votes. The storm, however, blew over for a time; a large defection of country gentlemen eluded the sanguine hopes of the patriots. The Lords of Trade were revived; administration recovered their strength and spirit; and the flames of London, which were kindled by a mischievous madman, admonished all thinking men of the danger of an appeal to the people. In the premature dissolution which followed this session of parliament I lost my seat. Mr. Eliot was now deeply engaged in the measures of opposition, and the electors of Liskeard[1] are commonly of the same opinion as Mr. Eliot.

In this interval of my senatorial life I published the second and third volumes of the Decline and Fall. My ecclesiastical history still breathed the same spirit of freedom, but Protestant zeal is more indifferent to the characters and controversies of the fourth and fifth centuries. My obstinate silence had damped the ardour of the polemics. Dr. Watson, the most candid of my adversaries, assured me that he had no thoughts of renewing the attack, and my impartial balance of the virtues and vices of Julian was generally praised. This truce was interrupted only by some animadversions of the Catholics of Italy, and by some angry letters from Mr. Travis, who made me personally responsible for condemning, with the best critics, the spurious text of the three heavenly witnesses.

The piety or prudence of my Italian translator has provided an antidote against the poison of his original. The fifth and seventh volumes are armed with five letters from an anonymous divine to his friends, Foothead and Kirk, two English students at Rome; and this meritorious service is commended by Monsignor Stonor, a prelate of the same nation, who discovers much venom in the fluid and nervous style of Gibbon. The critical essay at the end of the third volume was furnished by the Abbate Nicola Spedalieri, whose zeal has gradually swelled to a more solid confutation in two quarto volumes. Shall I be excused for not having read them?

[1] The borough which Mr. Gibbon had represented in parliament.

The brutal insolence of Mr. Travis's challenge can only be excused by the absence of learning, judgment, and humanity; and to that excuse he has the fairest or foulest pretension. Compared with Archdeacon Travis, Chelsum and Davies assume the title of respectable enemies.

The bigoted advocate of popes and monks may be turned over even to the bigots of Oxford; and the wretched Travis still smarts under the lash of the merciless Porson. I consider Mr. Porson's answer to Archdeacon Travis as the most acute and accurate piece of criticism which has appeared since the days of Bentley. His strictures are founded in argument, enriched with learning, and enlivened with wit; and his adversary neither deserves nor finds any quarter at his hands. The evidence of the three heavenly witnesses would now be rejected in any court of justice; but prejudice is blind, authority is deaf, and our vulgar Bibles will ever be polluted by this spurious text, "Sedet æternumque sedebit." The more learned ecclesiastics will indeed have the secret satisfaction of reprobating in the closet what they read in the church.

I perceived, and without surprise, the coldness and even prejudice of the town; nor could a whisper escape my ear, that, in the judgment of many readers, my continuation was much inferior to the original attempts. An author who cannot ascend will always appear to sink: envy was now prepared for my reception, and the zeal of my religious was fortified by the motive of my political enemies. Bishop Newton, in writing his own life, was at full liberty to declare how much he himself and two eminent brethren were disgusted by Mr. G.'s prolixity, tediousness, and affectation. But the old man should not have indulged his zeal in a false and feeble charge against the historian,[1] who had faithfully and even

[1] *Extract from* Mr. GIBBON'S *Commonplace Book.*

Thomas Newton, Bishop of Bristol and Dean of St. Paul's, was born at Lichfield on the 21st of December 1703, O.S. (1st January 1704, N.S.) and died the 14th of February 1782, in the seventy-ninth year of his age. A few days before his death he finished the memoirs of his own life, which have been prefixed to an edition of his posthumous works, first published in quarto, and since (1787) republished in six volumes octavo.

P. 173, 174. Some books were published in 1781, which employed some of the

cautiously rendered Dr. Burnet's meaning by the alternative of sleep or repose. That philosophic divine supposes that in the period between death and the resurrection, human souls exist without a body, endowed with internal consciousness, but destitute of all active or passive connection with the external world. "Secundum communem dictionem sacræ scripturæ, mors dicitur

Bishop's leisure hours, and during his illness. Mr. Gibbon's "History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire" he read throughout, but it by no means answered his expectation; for he found it rather a prolix and tedious performance, his matter uninteresting, and his style affected; his testimonies not to be depended upon, and his frequent scoffs at religion offensive to every sober mind. He had before been convicted of making false quotations, which should have taught him more prudence and caution. But, without examining his authorities, there is one which must necessarily strike every man who has read Dr. Burnet's treatise De Statû Mortuorum. In vol. iii. p. 99, Mr. G. has the following note:—"Burnet (De S. M., pp. 56–84) collects the opinions of the Fathers, as far as they assert the sleep or repose of human souls till the day of judgment. He afterwards exposes (p. 91) the inconveniences which must arise if they possessed a more active and sensible existence. Who would not from hence infer that Dr. B. was an advocate for the sleep or insensible existence of the soul after death; whereas his doctrine is directly the contrary. He has employed some chapters in treating of the state of human souls in the interval between death and the resurrection; and after various proofs from reason, from Scripture, and the Fathers, his conclusions are, that human souls exist after their separation from the body, that they are in a good or evil state according to their good or ill behaviour, but that neither their happiness nor their misery will be complete or perfect before the day of judgment. His argumentation is thus summed up at the end of the fourth chapter:—"Ex quibus constat primo, animas superesse extincto corpore; secundo, bonas bene, malas male se habituras; tertio, nec illis summam felicitatem, nec his summam miseriam, accessuram esse ante diem judicii." (The Bishop's reading the whole was a greater compliment to the work than was paid to it by two of the most eminent of his brethren for their learning and station. The one entered upon it, but was soon wearied, and laid it aside in disgust: the other returned it upon the bookseller's hands; and it is said that Mr. G. himself happened unluckily to be in the shop at the same time.)

Does the Bishop comply with his own precept in the next page? (p. 175). "Old age should lenify, should soften men's manners, and make them more mild and gentle; but often has the contrary effect, hardens their hearts, and makes them more sour and crabbed." He is speaking of Dr. Johnson.

Have I ever insinuated that preferment hunting is the great occupation of an ecclesiastical life? (Memoirs *passim*); that a minister's influence and a bishop's patronage are sometimes pledged eleven deep? (p. 151); that a prebendary considers the audit week as the better part of the year? (p. 127); or that the most eminent of priests, the pope himself, would change their religion if anything better could be offered them? (p. 56). Such things are more than insinuated in the Bishop's Life, which afforded some scandal to the Church, and some diversion to the profane laity.

somnus, et morientes dicuntur abdormire, quod innuere mihi videtur statum mortis esse statum quietis, silentii, et ἀεργασίας." (De Statû Mortuorum, ch. v. p. 98.)

I was, however, encouraged by some domestic and foreign testimonies of applause; and the second and third volumes insensibly rose in sale and reputation to a level with the first. But the public is seldom wrong; and I am inclined to believe that, especially in the beginning, they are more prolix and less entertaining than the first. My efforts had not been relaxed by success, and I had rather deviated into the opposite fault of minute and superfluous diligence. On the Continent my name and writings were slowly diffused. A French translation of the first volume had disappointed the booksellers of Paris; and a passage in the third was construed as a personal reflection on the reigning monarch.[1]

Before I could apply for a seat at the general election the list was already full; but Lord North's promise was sincere, his recommendation was effectual, and I was soon chosen on a vacancy for the borough of Lymington, in Hampshire. In the first session of the new parliament, administration stood their ground; their final overthrow was reserved for the second. The American war had once been the favourite of the country. The pride of England was irritated by the resistance of her colonies, and the executive power was driven by national clamour into the most vigorous and coercive measures. But the length of a fruitless contest, the loss of armies, the accumulation of debt and taxes, and the hostile confederacy of France, Spain, and Holland, indisposed the public to the American war, and the persons by whom it was conducted; the representatives of the people followed, at a slow distance, the changes of their opinion; and

[1] It may not be generally known that Louis XVI. is a great reader, and a reader of English books. On perusing a passage of my History which seems to compare him to Arcadius or Honorius, he expressed his resentment to the Prince of B——, from whom the intelligence was conveyed to me. I shall neither disclaim the allusion nor examine the likeness; but the situation of the late King of France excludes all suspicion of flattery, and I am ready to declare that the concluding observations of my third volume were written before his accession to the throne.

the ministers who refused to bend were broken by the tempest. As soon as Lord North had lost, or was about to lose, a majority in the House of Commons, he surrendered his office, and retired to a private station, with the tranquil assurance of a clear conscience and a cheerful temper; the old fabric was dissolved, and the posts of government were occupied by the victorious and veteran troops of opposition. The Lords of Trade were not immediately dismissed, but the Board itself was abolished by Mr. Burke's bill, which decency had compelled the patriots to revive; and I was stripped of a convenient salary, after having enjoyed it about three years.

So flexible is the title of my History, that the final era might be fixed at my own choice; and I long hesitated whether I should be content with the three volumes, the Fall of the Western Empire, which fulfilled my first engagement with the public. In this interval of suspense, nearly a twelvemonth, I returned by a natural impulse to the Greek authors of antiquity; I read with new pleasure the Iliad and the Odyssey, the Histories of Herodotus, Thucydides, and Xenophon, a large portion of the tragic and comic theatre of Athens, and many interesting dialogues of the Socratic school. Yet in the luxury of freedom I began to wish for the daily task, the active pursuit, which gave a value to every book and an object to every inquiry; the preface of a new edition announced my design, and I dropped without reluctance from the age of Plato to that of Justinian. The original texts of Procopius and Agathias supplied the events and even the characters of his reign; but a laborious winter was devoted to the Codes, the Pandects, and the modern interpreters, before I presumed to form an abstract of the civil law. My skill was improved by practice, my diligence perhaps was quickened by the loss of office; and, excepting the last chapter, I had finished the fourth volume before I sought a retreat on the banks of the Leman Lake.

It is not the purpose of this narrative to expatiate on the public or secret history of the times—the schism which followed the death of the Marquis of Rockingham, the appointment of the

Earl of Shelburne, the resignation of Mr. Fox, and his famous coalition with Lord North. But I may assert, with some degree of assurance, that in their political conflict those great antagonists had never felt any personal animosity to each other, that their reconciliation was easy and sincere, and that their friendship has never been clouded by the shadow of suspicion or jealousy. The most violent or venal of their respective followers embraced this fair occasion of revolt, but their alliance still commanded a majority in the House of Commons; the peace was censured, Lord Shelburne resigned, and the two friends knelt on the came cushion to take the oath of Secretary of State. From a principle of gratitude I adhered to the coalition. My vote was counted in the day of battle, but I was overlooked in the division of the spoil. There were many claimants more deserving and importunate than myself; the Board of Trade could not be restored; and while the list of places was curtailed, the number of candidates was doubled. An easy dismission to a secure seat at the Board of Customs or Excise was promised on the first vacancy, but the chance was distant and doubtful; nor could I solicit with much ardour an ignoble servitude, which would have robbed me of the most valuable of my studious hours. At the same time the tumult of London, and the attendance on parliament, were grown more irksome; and without some additional income, I could not long or prudently maintain the style of expense to which I was accustomed.

From my early acquaintance with Lausanne I had always cherished a secret wish that the school of my youth might become the retreat of my declining age. A moderate fortune would secure the blessings of ease, leisure, and independence. The country, the people, the manners, the language, were congenial to my taste; and I might indulge the hope of passing some years in the domestic society of a friend. After travelling with several English,[1] M. Deyverdun was now settled at home, in a pleasant habitation, the gift of his deceased aunt. We had long been

[1] Sir Richard Worsley, Lord Chesterfield, Broderick Lord Middleton, and Mr. Hume, brother to Sir Abraham.

separated, we had long been silent; yet in my first letter I exposed, with the most perfect confidence, my situation, my sentiments, and my designs. His immediate answer was a warm and joyful acceptance. The picture of our future life provoked my impatience, and the terms of arrangement were short and simple, as he possessed the property, and I undertook the expense of our common house. Before I could break my English chain it was incumbent on me to struggle with the feelings of my heart, the indolence of my temper, and the opinion of the world, which unanimously condemned this voluntary banishment. In the disposal of my effects, the library, a sacred deposit, was alone excepted. As my post chaise moved over Westminster Bridge I bid a long farewell to the "fumum et opes strepitumque Romæ." My journey by the direct road through France was not attended with any accident, and I arrived at Lausanne nearly twenty years after my second departure. Within less than three months the coalition struck on some hidden rocks; had I remained on board I should have perished in the general shipwreck.

Since my establishment at Lausanne more than seven years have elapsed; and if every day has not been equally soft and serene, not a day, not a moment, has occurred in which I have repented of my choice. During my absence, a long portion of human life, many changes had happened: my elder acquaintance had left the stage; virgins were ripened into matrons, and children were grown to the age of manhood. But the same manners were transmitted from one generation to another: my friend alone was an inestimable treasure; my name was not totally forgotten, and all were ambitious to welcome the arrival of a stranger and the return of a fellow-citizen. The first winter was given to a general embrace, without any nice discrimination of persons and characters. After a more regular settlement, a more accurate survey, I discovered three solid and permanent benefits of my new situation. 1. My personal freedom had been somewhat impaired by the House of Commons and the Board of Trade; but I was now delivered from the chain of duty and dependence, from the hopes and fears of political adventure. My sober mind

was no longer intoxicated by the fumes of party, and I rejoiced in my escape, as often as I read of the midnight debates which preceded the dissolution of parliament. My English economy had been that of a solitary bachelor who might afford some occasional dinners. In Switzerland I enjoyed at every meal, at every hour, the free and pleasant conversation of the friend of my youth; and my daily table was always provided for the reception of one or two extraordinary guests. Our importance in society is less a positive than a relative weight. In London I was lost in the crowd; I ranked with the first families of Lausanne, and my style of prudent expense enabled me to maintain a fair balance of reciprocal civilities. 3. Instead of a small house between a street and a stable-yard, I began to occupy a spacious and convenient mansion, connected on the north side with the city, and open on the south to a beautiful and boundless horizon. A garden of four acres had been laid out by the taste of Mr. Deyverdun. From the garden a rich scenery of meadows and vineyards descends to the Leman Lake, and the prospect far beyond the lake is crowned by the stupendous mountains of Savoy. My books and my acquaintance had been first united in London, but this happy position of my library in town and country was finally reserved for Lausanne. Possessed of every comfort in this triple alliance, I could not be tempted to change my habitation with the changes of the seasons.

My friends had been kindly apprehensive that I should not be able to exist in a Swiss town at the foot of the Alps after having so long conversed with the first men of the first cities of the world. Such lofty connections may attract the curious and gratify the vain, but I am too modest, or too proud, to rate my own value by that of my associates; and whatsoever may be the fame of learning or genius, experience has shown me that the cheaper qualifications of politeness and good sense are of more useful currency in the commerce of life. By many conversation is esteemed as a theatre or a school; but, after the morning has been occupied by the labours of the library, I wish to unbend rather than to exercise my mind; and in the interval between tea and supper I am far

from disdaining the innocent amusement of a game at cards. Lausanne is peopled by a numerous gentry, whose companionable idleness is seldom disturbed by the pursuits of avarice or ambition. The women, though confined to a domestic education, are endowed for the most part with more taste and knowledge than their husbands and brothers; but the decent freedom of both sexes is equally remote from the extremes of simplicity and refinement. I shall add as a misfortune rather than a merit, that the situation and beauty of the Pays de Vaud, the long habits of the English, the medical reputation of Dr. Tissot, and the fashion of viewing the mountains and glaciers, have opened us on all sides to the incursions of foreigners. The visits of M. and Madame Necker, of Prince Henry of Prussia, and of Mr. Fox, may form some pleasing exceptions; but, in general, Lausanne has appeared most agreeable in my eyes, when we have been abandoned to our own society. I had frequently seen M. Necker in the summer of 1784, at a country house near Lausanne, where he composed his treatise on the Administration of the Finances. I have since, in October 1790, visited him in his present residence, the castle and barony of Copet, near Geneva. Of the merits and measures of that statesman various opinions may be entertained; but all impartial men must agree in their esteem of his integrity and patriotism.

In the month of August 1784, Prince Henry of Prussia, in his way to Paris, passed three days at Lausanne. His military conduct has been praised by professional men; his character has been vilified by the wit and malice of a demon;[1] but I was flattered by his affability and entertained by his conversation.

In his tour of Switzerland (September 1788), Mr. Fox gave me two days of free and private society.[2] He seemed to feel, and even to envy, the happiness of my situation, while I admired the powers of a superior man, as they are blended in his attractive character with the softness and simplicity of a child. Perhaps no

[1] Mémoire Secret de la Cour de Berlin.

[2] See letter in the Continuation, October 1, 1788.

human being was ever more perfectly exempt from the taint of malevolence, vanity, or falsehood.

My transmigration from London to Lausanne could not be effected without interrupting the course of my historical labours. The hurry of my departure, the joy of my arrival, the delay of my tools, suspended their progress; and a full twelvemonth was lost before I could resume the thread of regular and daily industry. A number of books most requisite and least common had been previously selected; the academical library of Lausanne, which I could use as my own, contained at least the Fathers and Councils; and I have derived some occasional succour from the public collections of Berne and Geneva. The fourth volume was soon terminated by an abstract of the controversies of the Incarnation, which the learned Dr. Prideaux was apprehensive of exposing to profane eyes. It had been the original design of the learned Dean Prideaux to write the history of the ruin of the Eastern Church. In this work it would have been necessary, not only to unravel all those controversies which the Christians made about the hypostatical union, but also to unfold all the niceties and subtle notions which each sect entertained concerning it. The pious historian was apprehensive of exposing that incomprehensible mystery to the cavils and objections of unbelievers; and he durst not, "seeing the nature of this book, venture it abroad in so wanton and lewd an age."[1]

In the fifth and sixth volumes the revolutions of the empire and the world are most rapid, various, and instructive; and the Greek or Roman historians are checked by the hostile narratives of the barbarians of the East and the West.[2]

It was not till after many designs and many trials that I preferred, as I still prefer, the method of grouping my picture by nations; and the seeming neglect of chronological order is surely compensated by the superior merits of interest and perspicuity.

[1] See preface to the Life of Mahomet, pp. 10, 11.

[2] I have followed the judicious precept of the Abbé de Mably (Manière d'écrire l'Histoire, p. 110), who advises the historian not to dwell too minutely on the decay of the eastern empire; but to consider the barbarian conquerors as a more worthy subject of his narrative. "Fas est et ab hoste doceri."

The style of the first volume is, in my opinion, somewhat crude and elaborate; in the second and third it is ripened into ease, correctness, and numbers; but in the three last I may have been seduced by the facility of my pen, and the constant habit of speaking one language and writing another may have infused some mixture of Gallic idioms. Happily for my eyes, I have always closed my studies with the day, and commonly with the morning; and a long but temperate labour has been accomplished without fatiguing either the mind or body; but when I computed the remainder of my time and my task, it was apparent that, according to the season of publication, the delay of a month would be productive of that of a year. I was now straining for the goal, and in the last winter many evenings were borrowed from the social pleasures of Lausanne. I could now wish that a pause, an interval, had been allowed for a serious revisal.

I have presumed to mark the moment of conception: I shall now commemorate the hour of my final deliverance. It was on the day, or rather night, of the 27th of June 1787, between the hours of eleven and twelve, that I wrote the last lines of the last page in a summer-house in my garden. After laying down my pen, I took several turns in a berceau, or covered walk of acacias, which commands a prospect of the country, the lake, and the mountains. The air was temperate, the sky was serene, the silver orb of the moon was reflected from the waters, and all nature was silent. I will not dissemble the first emotions of joy on the recovery of my freedom, and perhaps the establishment of my fame. But my pride was soon humbled, and a sober melancholy was spread over my mind, by the idea that I had taken an everlasting leave of an old and agreeable companion, and that whatsoever might be the future date of my History, the life of the historian must be short and precarious. I will add two facts, which have seldom occurred in the composition of six, or at least of five, quartos. 1. My first rough manuscript, without any intermediate copy, has been sent to the press. 2. Not a sheet has been seen by any human eyes, excepting those of the

author and the printer. The faults and the merits are exclusively my own.[1]

I cannot help recollecting a much more extraordinary fact, which is affirmed of himself by Rétif de la Bretonne, a voluminous and original writer of French novels. He laboured, and may still labour, in the humble office of corrector to a printing-house; but this office enabled him to transport an entire volume from his mind to the press; and his work was given to the public without ever having been written with a pen.

After a quiet residence of four years, during which I had never moved ten miles from Lausanne, it was not without some reluctance and terror that I undertook, in a journey of two hundred leagues, to cross the mountains and the sea. Yet this formidable adventure was achieved without danger or fatigue; and at the end of a fortnight I found myself in Lord Sheffield's house and library, safe, happy, and at home. The character of my friend (Mr. Holroyd) had recommended him to a seat in parliament for Coventry, the command of a regiment of light dragoons, and an Irish peerage. The sense and spirit of his political writings have decided the public opinion on the great questions of our commercial interest with America and Ireland.[2]

The sale of his Observations on the American States was diffusive, their effect beneficial; the Navigation Act, the palladium of Britain, was defended, and perhaps saved, by his pen; and he proves, by the weight of fact and argument, that the mother country may survive and flourish after the loss of America. My friend has never cultivated the arts of composition, but his materials are copious and correct, and he leaves on his paper

[1] *Extract from* Mr. GIBBON'S *Commonplace Book.*

The Fourth Volume of the History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire. . . .	begun March 1st, 1782—ended June 1784.
The Fifth Volume. . . .	begun July 1784—ended May 1st, 1786.
The Sixth Volume. . . .	begun May 18th, 1786—ended June 27th, 1787.

These three volumes were sent to press August 15th, 1787, and the whole impression was concluded April following.

[2] Observations on the Commerce of the American States, by John Lord Sheffield, the sixth edition, London, 1784, in octavo.

the clear impression of an active and vigorous mind. His "Observations on the Trade, Manufactures, and Present State of Ireland" were intended to guide the industry, to correct the prejudices, and to assuage the passions of a country which seemed to forget that she could be free and prosperous only by a friendly connection with Great Britain. The concluding observations are written with so much ease and spirit that they may be read by those who are the least interested in the subject.

He fell (in 1784) with the unpopular coalition; but his merit has been acknowledged at the last general election, 1790, by the honourable invitation and free choice of the city of Bristol. During the whole time of my residence in England I was entertained at Sheffield Place and in Downing Street by his hospitable kindness; and the most pleasant period was that which I passed in the domestic society of the family. In the larger circle of the metropolis I observed the country and the inhabitants with the knowledge, and without the prejudices, of an Englishman; but I rejoiced in the apparent increase of wealth and prosperity, which might be fairly divided between the spirit of the nation and the wisdom of the minister. All party resentment was now lost in oblivion; since I was no man's rival, no man was my enemy. I felt the dignity of independence, and as I asked no more, I was satisfied with the general civilities of the world. The house in London which I frequented with most pleasure and assiduity was that of Lord North. After the loss of power and of sight, he was still happy in himself and his friends; and my public tribute of gratitude and esteem could no longer be suspected of any interested motive. Before my departure from England, I was present at the august spectacle of Mr. Hastings's trial in Westminster Hall. It is not my province to absolve or condemn the Governor of India; but Mr. Sheridan's eloquence demanded my applause; nor could I hear without emotion the personal compliment which he paid me in the presence of the British nation.[1]

[1] He said the facts that made up the volume of narrative were unparalleled in atrociousness, and that nothing equal in criminality was to be traced, either in ancient or modern history, in the correct periods of Tacitus or the luminous page of Gibbon.—*Morning Chronicle*, June 14, 1788.

From this display of genius, which blazed four successive days, I shall stoop to a very mechanical circumstance. As I was waiting in the managers' box, I had the curiosity to inquire of the shorthand writer, how many words a ready and rapid orator might pronounce in an hour? From 7000 to 7500 was his answer. The medium of 7200 will afford 120 words in a minute, and two words in each second. But this computation will only apply to the English language.

As the publication of my three last volumes was the principal object, so it was the first care of my English journey. The previous arrangements with the bookseller and the printer were settled in my passage through London; and the proofs, which I returned more correct, were transmitted every post from the press to Sheffield Place. The length of the operation, and the leisure of the country, allowed some time to review my manuscript. Several rare and useful books, the "Assises de Jerusalem," Ramusius de Bello C. P^aro^, the Greek Acts of the Synod of Florence, the "Statuta Urbis Romæ," &c., were procured, and introduced in their proper places the supplements which they afforded. The impression of the fourth volume had consumed three months. Our common interest required that we should move with a quicker pace; and Mr. Strahan fulfilled his engagement, which few printers could sustain, of delivering every week three thousand copies of nine sheets. The day of publication was, however, delayed, that it might coincide with the fifty-first anniversary of my own birthday. The double festival was celebrated by a cheerful literary dinner at Mr. Cadell's house; and I seemed to blush while they read an elegant compliment from Mr. Hayley,[1] whose poetical talents had more than once been

[1] OCCASIONAL STANZAS, *by Mr. Hayley, read after the Dinner at Mr. Cadell's, May* 8, 1788, *being the Day of the Publication of the Three Last Volumes of Mr. Gibbon's History, and his Birthday.*

Genii of England, and of Rome,
In mutual triumph here assume
The honours each may claim:
This social scene with smiles survey,
And consecrate the festive day
To Friendship and to Fame!

employed in the praise of his friend. Before Mr. Hayley inscribed with my name his Epistles on History, I was not acquainted with that amiable man and elegant poet. He afterwards thanked me in verse for my second and third volumes;[1] and in the summer

Enough, by Desolation's tide,
With anguish and indignant pride,
Has Rome bewailed her fate;
And mourned that Time, in Havoc's hour,
Defaced each monument of power
To speak her truly great:

O'er maimed Polybius, just and sage,
O'er Livy's mutilated page,
How deep was her regret!
Touched by this Queen, in ruin grand,
See, Glory, by an English hand,
Now pays a mighty debt.

Lo, sacred to the Roman Name,
And raised, like Rome's immortal Fame,
By Genius and by Toil,
The splendid Work is crowned to-day,
On which Oblivion ne'er shall prey,
Nor Envy make her spoil.

England, exult, and view not now
With jealous glance each nation's brow,
Where History's palm has spread:
In every path of liberal art,
Thy sons to prime distinction start,
And no superior dread.

Science for thee a Newton raised;
For thy renown a Shakespeare blazed,
Lord of the drama's sphere:
In different fields to equal praise
See History now thy Gibbon raise
To shine without a peer.

Eager to honour living worth,
And bless to-day the double birth,
That proudest joy may claim,
Let artless Truth this homage pay,
And consecrate the festive day
To Friendship and to Fame.

[1] SONNET *to* EDWARD GIBBON, Esq.
On the Publication of his Second and Third Volumes, 1781.

With proud delight the imperial founder gazed
On the new beauty of his second Rome,
When on his eager eye rich temples blazed,
And his fair city rose in youthful bloom:

of 1781, the Roman Eagle[1] (a proud title) accepted the invitation of the English Sparrow, who chirped in the groves of Eartham,

A pride more noble may thy heart assume,
O Gibbon, gazing on thy growing work,
In which, constructed for a happier doom,
No hasty marks of vain ambition lurk:
Thou mayst deride both Time's destructive sway
And baser Envy's beauty-mangling dirk;
Thy gorgeous fabric, planned with wise delay,
Shall baffle foes more savage than the Turk;
As ages multiply, its fame shall rise,
And earth must perish ere its splendour dies.
—HAYLEY'S *Works*, 8vo edit., vol. i. p. 162.

1 *A* CARD *of* INVITATION *to* Mr. GIBBON *at Brightheimstone*, 1781.

An English sparrow, pert and free,
Who chirps beneath his native tree,
Hearing the Roman eagle's near,
And feeling more respect than fear,
Thus, with united love and awe,
Invites him to his shed of straw.
Though he is but a twittering sparrow,
The field he hops in rather narrow,
When nobler plumes attract his view
He ever pays them homage due,
He looks with reverential wonder
On him whose talons bear the thunder;
Nor could the jackdaws e'er inveigle
His voice to vilify the eagle,
Though, issuing from the holy towers
In which they build their warmest bowers,
Their sovereign's haunt they slily search,
In hopes to catch him on his perch,
(For Pindar says, beside his God
The thunder-bearing bird will nod),
Then, peeping round his still retreat,
They pick from underneath his feet
Some moulted feather he lets fall,
And swear he cannot fly at all.
Lord of the sky, whose pounce can tear
These croakers, that infest the air,
Trust him, the sparrow loves to sing
The praise of thy imperial wing!
He thinks thou'lt deem him, on his word,
An honest, though familiar bird;
And hopes thou soon wilt condescend
To look upon thy little friend;
That he may boast around his grove
A visit from the bird of Jove.
—HAYLEY'S *Works*, vol. i. p. 189.

near Chichester. As most of the former purchasers were naturally desirous of completing their sets, the sale of the quarto edition was quick and easy, and an octavo size was printed to satisfy at a cheaper rate the public demand. The conclusion of my work was generally read and variously judged. The style has been exposed to much academical criticism. A religious clamour was revived, and the reproach of indecency has been loudly echoed by the rigid censors of morals. I never could understand the clamour that has been raised against the indecency of my three last volumes. 1. An equal degree of freedom in the former part, especially in the first volume, had passed without reproach. 2. I am justified in painting the manners of the times: the vices of Theodora form an essential feature in the reign and character of Justinian. 3. My English text is chaste, and all licentious passages are left in the obscurity of a learned language. "Le Latin dans ses mots brave l'honnêteté," says the correct Boileau, in a country and idiom more scrupulous than our own. Yet, upon the whole, the History of the Decline and Fall seems to have struck root both at home and abroad, and may perhaps a hundred years hence still continue to be abused. I am less flattered by Mr. Porson's high encomium on the style and spirit of my History than I am satisfied with his honourable testimony to my attention, diligence, and accuracy, those humble virtues which religious zeal had most audaciously denied. The sweetness of his praise is tempered by a reasonable mixture of acid.[1] As the book may not be common in England, I shall transcribe my own character from the Bibliotheca Historica of Meuselius,[2] a learned and laborious German. "Summis ævi nostri historicis Gibbonus sine dubio adnumerandus est. Inter capitolii ruinas stans primum hujus operis scribendi consilium cepit. Florentissimos vitæ annos colligendo et laborando eidem impendit. Enatum inde monumentum ære perennius, licet passim appareant sinistrè dicta, minus perfecta, veritati non satis consentanea. Videmus quidem ubique fere studium scrutandi veritatemque scribendi maximum: tamen sine Tillemontio duce ubi scilicet hujus historia finitur sæpius noster titubat atque hallu-

[1] See his preface, pp. 28-32. [2] Vol. iv. part i. pp. 342-344.

cinatur. Quod vel maxime fit, ubi de rebus Ecclesiasticis vel de jurisprudentiâ Romanâ (tom. iv.) tradit, et in aliis locis. Attamen nævi hujus generis haud impediunt quo minus operis summam et οἰκονομίαν præclare dispositam, delectum rerum sapientissimum, argutum quoque interdum, dictionemque seu stylum historico æque ac philosopho dignissimum, et vix a quoque alio Anglo, Humio ac Robertsono haud exceptis (prærептum ?) vehementer laudemus, atque sæculo nostro de hujusmodi historiâ gratulemur . . . Gibbonus adversarios cum in tum extra patriam nactus est quia propogationem religionis Christianæ, non, ut vulgo fieri solet, aut more Theologorum, sed ut Historicum et Philosophum decet, exposuerat."

The French, Italian, and German translations have been executed with various success; but instead of patronising, I should willingly suppress such imperfect copies, which injure the character, while they propagate the name of the author. The first volume had been feebly, though faithfully, translated into French by M. Le Clerc de Septchenes, a young gentleman of a studious character and liberal fortune. After his decease the work was continued by two manufacturers of Paris, MM. Desmuniers and Cantwell; but the former is now an active member in the National Assembly, and the undertaking languishes in the hands of his associate. The superior merit of the interpreter, or his language, inclines me to prefer the Italian version; but I wish that it were in my power to read the German, which is praised by the best judges. The Irish pirates are at once my friends and my enemies. But I cannot be displeased with the two numerous and correct impressions which have been published for the use of the Continent at Basil in Switzerland.[1] The conquests of our language and literature are not confined to Europe alone, and a writer who succeeds in London is speedily read on the banks of the Delaware and the Ganges.

In the preface of the fourth volume, while I gloried in the name

[1] Of their fourteen octavo volumes the two last include the whole body of the notes. The public importunity had forced me to remove them from the end of the volume to the bottom of the page, but I have often repented of my compliance.

of an Englishman, I announced my approaching return to the neighbourhood of the Lake of Lausanne. This last trial confirmed my assurance that I had wisely chosen for my own happiness; nor did I once, in a year's visit, entertain a wish of settling in my native country. Britain is the free and fortunate island; but where is the spot in which I could unite the comforts and beauties of my establishment at Lausanne? The tumult of London astonished my eyes and ears; the amusements of public places were no longer adequate to the trouble; the clubs and assemblies were filled with new faces and young men; and our best society, our long and late dinners, would soon have been prejudicial to my health. Without any share in the political wheel I must be idle and insignificant; yet the most splendid temptations would not have enticed me to engage a second time in the servitude of parliament or office. At Tunbridge, some weeks after the publication of my History, I reluctantly quitted Lord and Lady Sheffield, and with a young Swiss friend,[1] whom I had introduced to the English world, I pursued the road of Dover and Lausanne. My habitation was embellished in my absence, and the last division of books which followed my steps increased my chosen library to the number of between six and seven thousand volumes. My seraglio was ample, my choice was free, my appetite was keen. After a full repast on Homer and Aristophanes, I involved myself in the philosophic maze of the writings of Plato, of which the dramatic is perhaps more interesting than the argumentative part; but I stepped aside into every path of inquiry which reading or reflection accidentally opened.

Alas! the joy of my return, and my studious ardour, were soon damped by the melancholy state of my friend M. Deyverdun. His health and spirits had long suffered a gradual decline, a succession of apoplectic fits announced his dissolution; and before he expired, those who loved him could not wish for the continuance of his life. The voice of reason might congratulate his deliverance, but the feelings of nature and friendship could

[1] M. Wilhelm de Severy.

be subdued only by time. His amiable character was still alive in my remembrance; each room, each walk, was imprinted with our common footsteps; and I should blush at my own philosophy, if a long interval of study had not preceded and followed the death of my friend. By his last will he left to me the option of purchasing his house and garden, or of possessing them during my life, on the payment either of a stipulated price, or of an easy retribution to his kinsman and heir. I should probably have been tempted by the demon of property, if some legal difficulties had not been started against my title: a contest would have been vexatious, doubtful, and invidious; and the heir most gratefully subscribed an agreement, which rendered my life-possession more perfect, and his future condition more advantageous. Yet I had often revolved the judicious lines in which Pope answers the objections of his long-sighted friend:—

> "Pity to build without or child or wife;
> Why, you'll enjoy it only all your life:
> Well, if the use be mine, does it concern one,
> Whether the name belong to Pope or Vernon?"

The certainty of my tenure has allowed me to lay out a considerable sum in improvements and alterations: they have been executed with skill and taste; and few men of letters, perhaps, in Europe, are so desirably lodged as myself. But I feel, and with the decline of years I shall more painfully feel, that I am alone in paradise. Among the circle of my acquaintance at Lausanne, I have gradually acquired the solid and tender friendship of a respectable family:[1] the four persons of whom it is composed are all endowed with the virtues best adapted to their age and situation; and I am encouraged to love the parents as a brother, and the children as a father. Every day we seek and find the opportunities of meeting: yet even this valuable connection cannot supply the loss of domestic society.

Within the last two or three years our tranquillity has been clouded by the disorders of France: many families at Lausanne were alarmed and affected by the terrors of an impending

[1] The family of De Severy.

bankruptcy; but the revolution, or rather the dissolution, of the kingdom has been heard and felt in the adjacent lands.

I beg leave to subscribe my assent to Mr. Burke's creed on the revolution of France. I admire his eloquence, I approve his politics, I adore his chivalry, and I can almost excuse his reverence for Church establishments. I have sometimes thought of writing a dialogue of the dead, in which Lucian, Erasmus, and Voltaire should mutually acknowledge the danger of exposing an old superstition to the contempt of the blind and fanatic multitude.

A swarm of emigrants of both sexes who escaped from the public ruin has been attracted by the vicinity, the manners, and the language of Lausanne; and our narrow habitations in town and country are now occupied by the first names and titles of the departed monarchy. These noble fugitives are entitled to our pity: they may claim our esteem; but they cannot, in their present state of mind and fortune, much contribute to our amusement. Instead of looking down as calm and idle spectators on the theatre of Europe, our domestic harmony is somewhat embittered by the infusion of party spirit: our ladies and gentlemen assume the character of self-taught politicians; and the sober dictates of wisdom and experience are silenced by the clamour of the triumphant *democrates*. The fanatic missionaries of sedition have scattered the seeds of discontent in our cities and villages, which had flourished above two hundred and fifty years without fearing the approach of war, or feeling the weight of government. Many individuals and some communities appear to be infested with the Gallic frenzy, the wild theories of equal and boundless freedom; but I trust that the body of the people will be faithful to their sovereign and to themselves; and I am satisfied that the failure or success of a revolt would equally terminate in the ruin of the country. While the aristocracy of Berne protects the happiness, it is superfluous to inquire whether it be founded in the rights of man: the economy of the state is liberally supplied without the aid of taxes; and the magistrates must reign with prudence and equity, since they are unarmed in the midst of an armed nation.

The revenue of Berne, excepting some small duties, is derived from church lands, tithes, feudal rights, and interest of money. The republic has nearly £500,000 sterling in the English funds, and the amount of their treasure is unknown to the citizens themselves. For myself (may the omen be averted), I can only declare that the first stroke of a rebel drum would be the signal of my immediate departure.

When I contemplate the common lot of mortality, I must acknowledge that I have drawn a high prize in the lottery of life. The far greater part of the globe is overspread with barbarism or slavery. In the civilised world, the most numerous class is condemned to ignorance and poverty; and the double fortune of my birth in a free and enlightened country, in an honourable and wealthy family, is the lucky chance of an unit against millions. The general probability is about three to one that a new-born infant will not live to complete his fiftieth year.[1] I have now passed that age, and may fairly estimate the present value of my existence in the threefold division of mind, body, and estate.

1. The first and indispensable requisite of happiness is a clear conscience, unsullied by the reproach or remembrance of an unworthy action.

> "Hic murus aheneus esto,
> Nil conscire sibi, nullâ pallescere culpâ."

I am endowed with a cheerful temper, a moderate sensibility, and a natural disposition to repose rather than to activity: some mischievous appetites and habits have perhaps been corrected by philosophy or time. The love of study, a passion which derives fresh vigour from enjoyment, supplies each day, each hour, with a perpetual source of independent and rational pleasure; and I am not sensible of any decay of the mental faculties. The original soil has been highly improved by cultivation; but it may be questioned whether some flowers of fancy, some grateful errors,

[1] See Buffon, Supplément à l'Histoire Naturelle, tom. vii. p. 158–164. Of a given number of new-born infants, one half, by the fault of nature or man, is extinguished before the age of puberty and reason—a melancholy calculation!

have not been eradicated with the roots of prejudice. 2. Since I have escaped from the long perils of my childhood, the serious advice of a physician has seldom been requisite. "The madness of superfluous health" I have never known; but my tender constitution has been fortified by time, and the inestimable gift of the sound and peaceful slumbers of infancy may be imputed both to the mind and body. 3. I have already described the merits of my society and situation; but these enjoyments would be tasteless or bitter if their possession were not assured by an annual and adequate supply. According to the scale of Switzerland I am a rich man; and I am indeed rich, since my income is superior to my expense, and my expense is equal to my wishes. My friend Lord Sheffield has kindly relieved me from the cares to which my taste and temper are most adverse: shall I add, that since the failure of my first wishes I have never entertained any serious thoughts of a matrimonial connection?

I am disgusted with the affectation of men of letters who complain that they have renounced a substance for a shadow; and that their fame (which sometimes is no insupportable weight) affords a poor compensation for envy, censure, and persecution.[1] My own experience, at least, has taught me a very different lesson. Twenty happy years have been animated by the labour of my History; and its success has given me a name, a rank, a character in the world, to which I should not otherwise have been entitled. The freedom of my writings has indeed provoked an implacable tribe; but as I was safe from the stings, I was soon accustomed to the buzzing of the hornets. My nerves are not tremblingly alive, and my literary temper is so happily framed, that I am less sensible of pain than of pleasure. The rational pride of an author may be offended rather than flattered by vague indiscriminate praise; but he cannot, he should not, be indifferent to the fair testimonies of private and public esteem.

[1] M. D'Alembert relates that as he was walking in the gardens of Sans Souci with the King of Prussia, Frederick said to him, "Do you see that old woman, a poor weeder, asleep on that sunny bank? She is probably a more happy being than either of us." The king and the philosopher may speak for themselves; for my part I do not envy the old woman.

Even his moral sympathy may be gratified by the idea that now, in the present hour, he is imparting some degree of amusement or knowledge to his friends in a distant land: (that one day his mind will be familiar to the grandchildren of those who are yet unborn.[1]) I cannot boast of the friendship or favour of princes; the patronage of English literature has long since been devolved on our booksellers, and the measure of their liberality is the least ambiguous test of our common success. Perhaps the golden mediocrity of my fortune has contributed to fortify my application.

The present is a fleeting moment, the past is no more; and our prospect of futurity is dark and doubtful. This day may possibly be my last; but the laws of probability, so true in general, so fallacious in particular, still allow about fifteen years.[2] I shall soon enter into the period which, as the most agreeable of his long life, was selected by the judgment and experience of the sage Fontenelle. (His choice is approved by the eloquent historian of nature, who fixes our moral happiness to the mature season in which our passions are supposed to be calmed, our duties fulfilled, our ambition satisfied, our fame and fortune established on a solid basis.[3]) In private conversation, that great and amiable man added the weight of his own experience; and this autumnal felicity might be exemplified in the lives of Voltaire, Hume, and many

[1] In the first of ancient or modern romances (Tom Jones), this proud sentiment, this feast of fancy, is enjoyed by the genius of Fielding—"Come, bright love of fame, &c., fill my ravished fancy with the hopes of charming ages yet to come. Foretell me that some tender maid, whose grandmother is yet unborn, hereafter, when, under the fictitious name of Sophia, she reads the real worth which once existed in my Charlotte, shall from her sympathetic breast send forth the heaving sigh. Do thou teach me not only to foresee but to enjoy, nay, even to feed on future praise. Comfort me by the solemn assurance that when the little parlour in which I sit at this moment shall be reduced to a worse furnished box, I shall be read with honour by those who never knew nor saw me, and whom I shall neither know nor see." Book xiii. chap. i.

[2] M. Buffon, from our disregard of the possibility of death within the four-and-twenty hours, concludes that a chance, which falls below or rises above ten thousand to one, will never affect the hopes or fears of a reasonable man. The fact is true, but our courage is the effect of thoughtlessness rather than of reflection. If a public lottery were drawn for the choice of an immediate victim, and if our name were inscribed on one of the ten thousand tickets, should we be perfectly easy?

[3] See Buffon.

other men of letters. I am far more inclined to embrace than to dispute this comfortable doctrine. I will not suppose any premature decay of the mind or body; but I must reluctantly observe that two causes, the abbreviation of time, and the failure of hope, will always tinge with a browner shade the evening of life.

LETTERS

FROM

EDWARD GIBBON, Esq.,

TO THE

RIGHT HON. LORD SHEFFIELD.

LETTERS.

LAUSANNE, *July* 30, 1788.—*Wednesday*, 3 *o'clock.*

I HAVE but a moment to say, before the departure of the post, that after a very pleasant journey I arrived here about half an hour ago; that I am as well arranged as if I had never stirred from this place; and that dinner on the table is just announced. Severy I dropped at his country house about two leagues off. I just saluted the family, who dine with me the day after to-morrow, and return to town for some days, I hope weeks, on my account. The son is an amiable and grateful youth, and even this journey has taught me to know and to love him still better. My satisfaction would be complete, had I not found a sad and serious alteration in poor Deyverdun; but thus our joys are chequered! I embrace all; and at this moment feel the last pang of our parting at Tunbridge. Convey this letter or information, without delay, from Sheffield Place to Bath. In a few days I shall write more amply to both places.

October 1, 1788.

After such an act of vigour as my first letter, composed, finished, and despatched within half an hour after my landing, while the dinner was smoking on the table, your knowledge of the animal must have taught you to expect a proportionable degree of relaxation; and you will be satisfied to hear, that, for many Wednesdays and Saturdays, I have consumed more time than would have sufficed for the epistle, in devising reasons for procrastinating it to the next post. At this very moment I begin so very late, as I am just going to dress, and dine in the country,

that I can take only the benefit of the date, October the first, and must be content to seal and send my letter next Saturday.

October the 4th.

Saturday is now arrived, and I much doubt whether I shall have time to finish. I rose, as usual, about seven; but as I knew I should have so much time, you know it would have been ridiculous to begin anything before breakfast. When I returned from my breakfast-room to the library, unluckily I found on the table some new and interesting books, which instantly caught my attention; and without injuring my correspondent, I could safely bestow a single hour to gratify my curiosity. Some things which I found in them insensibly led me to other books and other inquiries; the morning has stolen away, and I shall be soon summoned to dress and dine with the two Severys, father and son, who are returned from the country on a disagreeable errand, an illness of Madame, from which she is, however, recovering. Such is the faithful picture of my mind and manners, and from a single day *disce omnes*. After having been so long chained to the oar, in a splendid galley indeed, I freely and fairly enjoy my liberty as I promised in my preface; range without control over the wide expanse of my library; converse, as my fancy prompts me, with poets and historians, philosophers and orators, of every age and language; and often indulge my meditations in the invention and arrangement of mighty works, which I shall probably never find time or application to execute. My garden, berçeau, and pavilion often varied the scene of my studies; the beautiful weather which we have enjoyed exhilarated my spirits, and I again tasted the wisdom and happiness of my retirement, till that happiness was interrupted by a very serious calamity, which took from me for above a fortnight all thoughts of study, of amusement, and even of correspondence. I mentioned in my first letter the uneasiness I felt at poor Deyverdun's declining health, how much the pleasure of my life was embittered by the sight of a suffering and languid friend. The joy of our meeting appeared at first to revive him; and, though not satisfied, I began to think,

at least to hope, that he was every day gaining ground; when, alas! one morning I was suddenly recalled from my berçeau to the house, with the dreadful intelligence of an apoplectic stroke. I found him senseless. The best assistance was instantly collected, and he had the aid of the genius and experience of M. Tissot, and of the assiduous care of another physician, who for some time scarcely quitted his bedside either night or day. While I was in momentary dread of a relapse, with a confession from his physicians that such a relapse must be fatal, you will feel that I was much more to be pitied than my friend. At length art or nature triumphed over the enemy of life. I was soon assured that all immediate danger was past; and now for many days I have had the satisfaction of seeing him recover, though by slow degrees, his health and strength, his sleep and appetite. He now walks about the garden, and receives his particular friends, but has not yet gone abroad. His future health will depend very much upon his own prudence. But, at all events, this has been a very serious warning, and the slightest indisposition will hereafter assume a very formidable aspect. But let us turn from this melancholy subject. The Man of the People escaped from the tumult, the bloody tumult of the Westminster election, to the lakes and mountains of Switzerland, and I was informed that he was arrived at the Lyon d'Or. I sent a compliment; he answered it in person, and settled at my house for the remainder of the day. I have eat and drank, and conversed and sat up all night with Fox in England, but it never has happened, perhaps it never can happen again, that I should enjoy him as I did that day, alone, from ten in the morning till ten at night. Poor Deyverdun, before his accident, wanted spirits to appear, and has regretted it since. Our conversation never flagged a moment, and he seemed thoroughly pleased with the place and with his company. We had little politics, though he gave me, in a few words, such a character of Pitt as one great man should give of another his rival; much of books, from my own, on which he flattered me very pleasantly, to Homer and the Arabian Nights; much about the country, my garden (which he

understand his letter than I do, and upon the whole I think it suits me and would do as well for minister. The next morning I gave him a guide to walk him about the town and country, and invited some company to meet him at dinner. The following day he continued his journey to Berne and Zurich, and I have heard of him by various means. The people gaze at him as a prodigy, but he shows little inclination to converse with them, &c. &c. &c. Our friend Douglas has been curious, attentive, agreeable; and in every place where he has resided some days, he has left acquaintance who esteem and regret him. I never knew so clear and general an impression.

After this long letter I have yet many things to say, though none of any pressing consequence. I hope you are not idle in the deliverance of Berlin, though the late events and edicts in France begin to reconcile me to the possession of dirty acres. What think you of Necker and the States-Generales? Are not the public expectations too sanguine? Adieu. I will write soon to my lady separately, though I have not any particular subject for her ear. Ever yours.

LAUSANNE, *Nov.* 25, 1788.

As I have no correspondents but yourself, I should have been reduced to the stale and stupid communications of the newspapers, if you had not despatched me an excellent sketch of the extraordinary state of things. In so new a case the *salus populi* must be the first law; and any extraordinary acts of the two remaining branches of the legislature must be excused by necessity, and ratified by general consent. . . . . .

. . Till things are settled, I expect a regular journal.

From kingdoms I descend to farms. . . . . .

. . . . . Adieu.

LAUSANNE, *Dec.* 13, 1788.

. . . . . .

. . . . . Of public affairs I can only hear with curiosity and wonder. Careless as you may think me, I feel myself deeply interested. You must now write often.

Make Miss Firth copy any curious fragments; and stir up any of my well-informed acquaintance, Batt, Douglas, Adam, perhaps Lord Loughborough, to correspond with me. I will answer them.

We are now cold and gay at Lausanne. The Severys came to town yesterday. I saw a good deal of Lords Malmesbury and Beauchamp, and their ladies. Ellis, of the Rolliad, was with them. I like him much. I gave them a dinner.

Adieu for the present. Deyverdun is not worse.

LAUSANNE, *April* 25, 1789.

Before your letter, which I received yesterday, I was in the anxious situation of a king who hourly expects a courier from his general with the news of a decisive engagement. I had abstained from writing, for fear of dropping a word, or betraying a feeling, which might render you too cautious or too bold. On the famous 8th of April, between twelve and two, I reflected that the business was determined; and each succeeding day I computed the speedy approach of your messenger, with favourable or melancholy tidings. When I broke the seal, I expected to read, "What a damned unlucky fellow you are! Nothing tolerable was offered, and I indignantly withdrew the estate." I did remember the fate of poor Lenborough, and I was afraid of your magnanimity, &c. It is whimsical enough, but it is human nature, that I now begin to think of the deep-rooted foundations of land, and the airy fabric of the funds. I not only consent, but even wish, to have eight or ten thousand pounds on a good mortgage. The pipe of wine you sent to me was seized, and would have been confiscated, if the Government of Berne had not treated me with the most flattering and distinguished civility. They not only released the wine, but they paid out of their own pocket the shares to which the bailiff and the informer were entitled by law. I should not forget that the bailiff refused to accept of his part. Poor Deyverdun's constitution is quite broken. He has had two or three attacks, not so violent as the first. Every time the door is hastily opened, I expect to hear of

some fatal accident. The best or worst hopes of the physicians are only that he may linger some time longer; but if he lives till the summer, they propose sending him to some mineral waters at Aix, in Savoy. You will be glad to hear that I am now assured of possessing, during my life, this delightful house and garden. The act has been lately executed in the best form and the handsomest manner. I know not what to say of your miracles at home. We rejoice in the king's recovery, and its ministerial consequences; and I cannot be insensible to the hope, at least the chance, of seeing in this country a first lord of trade, or secretary at war. In your answer, which I shall impatiently expect, you will give me a full and true account of your designs, which by this time must have dropped, or be determined at least, for the present year. If you come, it is high time that we should look out for a house—a task much less easy than you may possibly imagine. Among new books, I recommend to you the Count de Mirabeau's great work, "Sur la Monarchie Prussienne." It is in your own way, and gives a very just and complete idea of that wonderful machine. His "Correspondance Secrète" is diabolically good. Adieu. Ever yours.

LAUSANNE, *June* 13, 1789.

You are in truth a wise, active, indefatigable, and inestimable friend; and as our virtues are often connected with our faults, if you were more tame and placid you would be perhaps of less use and value. A very important and difficult transaction seems to be nearly terminated with success and mutual satisfaction: we seem to run before the wind with a prosperous gale; and unless we should strike on some secret rocks which I do not foresee, shall, on or before the 31st July, enter the harbour of Content; though I cannot pursue the metaphor by adding we shall land, since our operation is of a very opposite tendency. I could not easily forgive myself for shutting you up in a dark room with parchments and attorneys, did I not reflect that this probably is the last material trouble that you will ever have on my account; and that after the labours and delays of twenty years, I shall at

last attain what I have always sighed for, a clear and competent income, above my wants and equal to my wishes. In this contemplation you will be sufficiently rewarded. I hope —— will be content with our title-deeds, for I cannot furnish another shred of parchment. Mrs. Gibbon's jointure is secured on the Beriton estate, and her legal consent is requisite for the sale. Again and again I must repeat my hope that she is perfectly satisfied, and that the close of her life may not be embittered by suspicion, or fear, or discontent. What new security does she prefer—the funds, the mortgage, or your land? At all events she must be made easy. I wrote to her again some time ago, and begged that if she were too weak to write, she would desire Mrs. Gould or Mrs. Holroyd to give me a line concerning her state of health. To this no answer. I am afraid she is displeased.

Now for the disposal of the money. I approve of the £8000 mortgage on Beriton; and honour your prudence in not showing, by the comparison of the rent and interest, how foolish it is to purchase land. . . . . .

. . . . . .

There is a chance of my drawing a considerable sum into this country, for an arrangement which you yourself must approve, but which I have not time to explain at present. For the sake of despatching, by this evening's post, an answer to your letter which arrived this morning, I confine myself to the needful, but in the course of a few days I will send a more familiar epistle. Adieu. Ever yours.

LAUSANNE, *July* 14, 1789.

Poor Deyverdun is no more. He expired Saturday the 4th instant; and in his unfortunate situation, death could only be viewed by himself and by his friends in the light of a consummation devoutly to be wished. Since September he has had a dozen apoplectic strokes, more or less violent. In the intervals between them his strength gradually decayed; every principle of life was exhausted; and had he continued to drag a miserable existence, he must probably have survived the loss of his faculties.

Of all misfortunes this was what he himself most apprehended; but his reason was clear and calm to the last. He beheld his approaching dissolution with the firmness of a philosopher. I fancied that time and reflection had prepared me for the event; but the habits of three-and-thirty years' friendship are not so easily broken. The first days, and more especially the first nights, were indeed painful. Last Wednesday and Saturday it would not have been in my power to write. I must now recollect myself, since it is necessary for me not only to impart the news, but to ask your opinion in a very serious and doubtful question, which must be decided without loss of time. I shall state the facts, but as I am on the spot, and as new lights may occur, I do not promise implicit obedience.

Had my poor friend died without a will, a female first cousin, settled somewhere in the north of Germany, and whom I believe he had never seen, would have been his heir-at-law. In the next degree he had several cousins; and one of these, an old companion, by name M. de Montagny, he has chosen for his heir. As this house and garden was the best and clearest part of poor Deyverdun's fortune; as there is a heavy duty or fine (what they call *lods*) on every change of property out of the legal descent; as Montagny has a small estate and a large family, it was necessary to make some provision in his favour. The will therefore leaves me the option of enjoying this place during my life, on paying the sum of £250 (I reckon in English money) at present, and an annual rent of £30; or else, of purchasing the house and garden for a sum which, including the duty, will amount to £2500. If I value the rent of £30 at twelve years' purchase, I may acquire my enjoyment for life at about the rate of £600; and the remaining £1900 will be the difference between that tenure and absolute perpetual property. As you have never accused me of too much zeal for the interest of posterity, you will easily guess which scale at first preponderated. I deeply felt the advantage of acquiring for the smaller sum every possible enjoyment, as long as I myself should be capable of enjoying: I rejected with scorn the idea of giving £1900 for ideal posthumous property; and I

deemed it of little moment whose name, after my death, should be inscribed on my house and garden at Lausanne. How often did I repeat to myself the philosophical lines of Pope, which seem to determine the question—

> "Pray Heaven, cries Swift, it last as you go on,
> I wish to God this house had been your own.
> Pity to build without or son or wife:
> Why, you'll enjoy it only all your life.
> Well, if the use be mine, does it concern one,
> Whether the name belong to Pope or Vernon?"

In this state of self-satisfaction I was not much disturbed by all my real or nominal friends, who exhort me to prefer the right of purchase. Among such friends, some are careless and some are ignorant; and the judgment of those who are able and willing to form an opinion is often biassed by some selfish or social affection, by some visible or invisible interest. But my own reflections have gradually and forcibly driven me from my first propensity, and these reflections I will now proceed to enumerate:—

1. I can make this purchase with ease and prudence. As I have had the pleasure of not hearing from you very lately, I flatter myself that you advance on a carpet road, and that almost by the receipt of this letter (July 31st), the acres of Beriton will be transmuted into £16,000. If the payment be not absolutely completed by that day, —— will not scruple, I suppose, depositing the £2600 at Gosling's to meet my draft. Should he hesitate, I can desire Darrel to sell *quantum sufficit* of my short annuities. As soon as the new settlement of my affairs is made, I shall be able, after deducting this sum, to square my expense to my income, &c.

2. On mature consideration, I am perhaps less selfish and less philosophical than I appear at first sight: indeed, were I not so, it would now be in my power to turn my fortune into life annuities, and let the devil take the hindmost. I feel (perhaps it is foolish), but I feel that this little paradise will please me still more when it is absolutely my own; and that I shall be encouraged in every improvement of use or beauty by the prospect that, after my

departure, it will be enjoyed by some person of my own choice. I sometimes reflect with pleasure that my writings will survive me, and that idea is at least as vain and chimerical.

3. The heir, M. de Montagny, is an old acquaintance. My situation of a lifeholder is rather new and singular in this country: the laws have not provided for many nice cases which may arise between the landlord and tenant: some I can foresee, others have been suggested, many more I might feel when it would be too late. His right of property might plague and confine me; he might forbid my lending to a friend, inspect my conduct, check my improvements, call for securities, repairs, &c. But if I purchase, I walk on my own terrace fierce and erect, the free master of one of the most delicious spots on the globe.

Should I ever migrate homewards (you stare, but such an event is less improbable than I could have thought it two years ago), this place would be disputed by strangers and natives.

Weigh these reasons, and send me without delay a rational explicit opinion, to which I shall pay such regard as the nature of circumstances will allow. But, alas! when all is determined, I shall possess this house, by whatsoever tenure, without friendship or domestic society. I did not imagine six years ago that a plan of life so congenial to my wishes would so speedily vanish. I cannot write upon any other subject. Adieu. Yours ever.

LAUSANNE, *August* 1789.

After receiving and despatching the power of attorney last Wednesday, I opened, with some palpitation, the unexpected missive which arrived this morning. The perusal of the contents spoiled my breakfast. They are disagreeable in themselves, alarming in their consequences, and peculiarly unpleasant at the present moment, when I hoped to have formed and secured the arrangements of my future life. I do not perfectly understand what are these deeds which are so inflexibly required; the wills and marriage settlements I have sufficiently answered. But your arguments do not convince ——, and I have very little hope from

the Lenborough search. What will be the event? If his objections are only the result of legal scrupulosity, surely they might be removed, and every chink might be filled by a general bond of indemnity, in which I boldly ask you to join, as it will be a substantial important act of friendship, without any possible risk to yourself or your successors. Should he still remain obdurate, I must believe what I already suspect, that —— repents of his purchase and wishes to elude the conclusion. Our case would be then hopeless, *ibi omnis effusus labor*, and the estate would be returned on our hands with the taint of a bad title. The refusal of mortgage does not please me, but surely our offer shows some confidence in the goodness of my title. If he will not take £8000 at four per cent. we must look out elsewhere; new doubts and delays will arise, and I am persuaded that you will not place an implicit confidence in any attorney. I know not as yet your opinion about my Lausanne purchase. If you are against it, the present position of affairs gives you great advantage, &c. &c. The Severys are all well; an uncommon circumstance for the four persons of the family at once. They are now at Mex, a country house six miles from hence, which I visit to-morrow for two or three days. They often come to town, and we shall contrive to pass a part of the autumn together at Rolle. I want to change the scene; and beautiful as the garden and prospect must appear to every eye, I feel that the state of my own mind casts a gloom over them; every spot, every walk, every bench, recalls the memory of those hours, of those conversations, which will return no more. But I tear myself from the subject. I could not help writing to-day, though I do not find I have said anything very material. As you must be conscious that you have agitated me, you will not postpone any agreeable, or even decisive intelligence. I almost hesitate whether I shall run over to England to consult with you on the spot, and to fly from poor Deyverdun's shade, which meets me at every turn. I did not expect to have felt his loss so sharply. But six hundred miles! Why are we so far off?

Once more, what is the difficulty of the title? Will men of

sense, in a sensible country, never get rid of the tyranny of lawyers? more oppressive and ridiculous than even the old yoke of the clergy. Is not a term of seventy or eighty years, nearly twenty in my own person, sufficient to prove our legal possession? Will not the records of fines and recoveries attest that I am free from any bar of entails and settlements? Consult some sage of the law whether their present demand be necessary and legal. If your ground be firm, force them to execute the agreement or forfeit the deposit. But if, as I much fear, they have a right, and a wish, to elude the consummation, would it not be better to release them at once, than to be hung up for five years, as in the case of Lovegrove, which cost me in the end £4000 or £5000? You are bold, you are wise; consult, resolve, act. In my penultimate letter I dropped a strange hint, that a migration homeward was not impossible. I know not what to say; my mind is all afloat; yet you will not reproach me with caprice or inconstancy. How many years did you damn my scheme of retiring to Lausanne! I executed that plan; I found as much happiness as is compatible with human nature, and during four years (1783–87) I never breathed a sigh of repentance. On my return from England the scene was changed: I found only a faint semblance of Deyverdun, and that semblance was each day fading from my sight. I have passed an anxious year, but my anxiety is now at an end, and the prospect before me is a melancholy solitude. I am still deeply rooted in this country; the possession of this paradise, the friendship of the Severys, a mode of society suited to my taste, and the enormous trouble and expense of a migration. Yet in England (when the present clouds are dispelled) I could form a very comfortable establishment in London, or rather at Bath; and I have a very noble country seat at about ten miles from East Grinstead in Sussex.[1] That spot is dearer to me than the rest of the three kingdoms; and I have sometimes wondered how two men, so opposite in their tempers and pursuits, should have imbibed so long and lively a propensity for each other. Sir Stanier Porten is just dead. He has left his widow with a moderate pension,

[1] Alluding to Sheffield Place.

and two children, my nearest relations. The eldest, Charlotte, is about Louisa's age, and also a most amiable sensible young creature. I have conceived a romantic idea of educating and adopting her; as we descend into the vale of years our infirmities require some domestic female society. Charlotte would be the comfort of my age, and I could reward her care and tenderness with a decent fortune. A thousand difficulties oppose the execution of the plan, which I have never opened but to you; yet it would be less impracticable in England than in Switzerland. Adieu. I am wounded: pour some oil into my wounds: yet I am less unhappy since I have thrown my mind upon paper.

Are you not amazed at the French Revolution? They have the power, will they have the moderation, to establish a good constitution? Adieu. Ever yours.

LAUSANNE, *Sept.* 9, 1789.

Within an hour after the reception of your last, I drew my pen for the purpose of a reply, and my exordium ran in the following words: "I find by experience that it is much more rational, as well as easy, to answer a letter of real business by the return of the post." This important truth is again verified by my own example. After writing three pages I was called away by a very rational motive, and the post departed before I could return to the conclusion. A second delay was coloured by some decent pretence. Three weeks have slipped away, and I now force myself on a task which I should have despatched without an effort on the first summons. My only excuse is, that I had little to write about English business, and that I could write nothing definite about my Swiss affairs. And first, as Aristotle says, of the first,

1. I was indeed in low spirits when I sent what you so justly style my dismal letter; but I do assure you that my own feelings contributed much more to sink me than any events or terrors relative to the sale of Beriton. But I again hope and trust, from your consolatory epistle, that, &c. &c.

2. My Swiss transaction has suffered a great alteration. I shall

not become the proprietor of my house and garden at Lausanne, and I relinquish the phantom with more regret than you could easily imagine. But I have been determined by a difficulty, which at first appeared of little moment, but which has gradually swelled to an alarming magnitude. There is a law in this country, as well as in some provinces of France, which is styled *le droit de retrait, le retrait lignagere* (Lord Loughborough must have heard of it), by which the relations of the deceased are entitled to redeem a house or estate at the price for which it has been sold; and as the sum fixed by poor Deyverdun is much below its known value, a crowd of competitors are beginning to start. The best opinions (for they are divided) are in my favour, that I am not subject to *le droit de retrait*, since I take not as a purchaser, but as a legatee. But the words of the will are somewhat ambiguous, the event of law is always uncertain, the administration of justice at Berne (the last appeal) depends too much on favour and intrigue; and it is very doubtful whether I could revert to the life-holding after having chosen and lost the property. These considerations engaged me to open a negotiation with M. de Montagny, through the medium of my friend the judge; and as he most ardently wishes to keep the house, he consented, though with some reluctance, to my proposals. Yesterday he signed a covenant in the most regular and binding form, by which he allows my power of transferring my interest, interprets in the most ample sense my right of making alterations, and expressly renounces all claim, as landlord, of visiting or inspecting the premises. I have promised to lend him twelve thousand livres (between seven and eight hundred pounds), secured on the house and land. The mortgage is four times its value; the interest of four pounds per cent. will be annually discharged by the rent of thirty guineas. So that I am now tranquil on that score for the remainder of my days. I hope that time will gradually reconcile me to the place which I have inhabited with my poor friend; for, in spite of the cream of London, I am still persuaded that no other place is so well adapted to my taste and habits of studious and social life.

Far from delighting in the whirl of a metropolis, my only complaint against Lausanne is the great number of strangers, always of English, and now of French, by whom we are infested in summer. Yet we have escaped the damned great ones, the Count d'Artois, the Polignacs, &c., who slip by us to Turin. What a scene is France! While the Assembly is voting abstract propositions, Paris is an independent republic; the provinces have neither authority nor freedom, and poor Necker declares that credit is no more, and that the people refuse to pay taxes. Yet I think you must be seduced by the abolition of tithes. If Eden goes to Paris you may have some curious information. Give me some account of Mr. and Mrs. Douglas. Do they live with Lord North? I hope they do. When will parliament be dissolved? Are you still Coventry-mad? I embrace my lady, the sprightly Maria, and the smiling Louisa. Alas! alas! you will never come to Switzerland. Adieu. Ever yours.

LAUSANNE, *Sept.* 25, 1789.

"Alas! what perils do environ
The man who meddles with cold iron."

Alas! what delays and difficulties do attend the man who meddles with legal and landed business! Yet if it be only to disappoint your expectation, I am not so very nervous at this new provoking obstacle. I had totally forgotten the deed in question, which was contrived in the last year of my father's life, to tie his hands and regulate the disorder of his affairs; and which might have been so easily cancelled by Sir Stanier, who had not the smallest interest in it, either for himself or his family. The amicable suit, which is now become necessary, must, I think, be short and unambiguous, yet I cannot help dreading the crotchets that lurk under the chancellor's great wig; and, at all events, I foresee some additional delay and expense. The golden pill of the £2800 has soothed my discontent; and if it be safely lodged with the Goslings, I agree with you in considering it as an unequivocal pledge of a fair and willing purchaser. It is

indeed chiefly in that light I now rejoice in so large a deposit, which is no longer necessary in its full extent. You are apprised by my last letter that I have reduced myself to the life enjoyment of the house and garden; and in spite of my feelings, I am every day more convinced that I have chosen the safer side. I believe my cause to have been good, but it was doubtful. Law in this country is not so expensive as in England, but it is more troublesome. I must have gone to Berne, have solicited my judges in person—a vile custom! The event was uncertain; and during at least two years I should have been in a state of suspense and anxiety, till the conclusion of which it would have been madness to have attempted any alteration or improvement. According to my present arrangement I shall want no more than eleven hundred pounds of the two thousand, and I suppose you will direct Gosling to lay out the remainder in India bonds, that it may not lie quite dead, while I am accountable to —— for the interest. The elderly lady in a male habit who informed me that Yorkshire is a register county, is a certain judge, one Sir William Blackstone, whose name you may possibly have heard. After stating the danger of purchasers and creditors, with regard to the title of estates on which they lay out or lend their money, he thus continues: "In Scotland every act and event regarding the transmission of property is regularly entered on record; and some of our own provincial divisions, particularly the extended county of York, and the populous county of Middlesex, have prevailed with the legislature to erect such registers in their respective districts" (Blackstone's Commentaries, vol. ii. p. 343, edition of 1774, in quarto). If I am mistaken, it is in pretty good company; but I suspect that we are all right, and that the register is confined to one or two ridings. As we have, alas! two or three months before us, I should hope that your prudent sagacity will discover some sound land, in case you should not have time to arrange another mortgage. I now write in a hurry, as I am just setting out for Rolle, where I shall be settled with cook and servants in a pleasant apartment till the middle of November. The Severys have a house there, where they pass the autumn. I am not sorry

to vary the scene for a few weeks, and I wish to be absent while some alterations are making in my house at Lausanne. I wish the change of air may be of service to Severy the father, but we do not at all like his present state of health. How completely, alas, how completely! could I now lodge you; but your firm resolve of making me a visit seems to have vanished like a dream. Next summer you will not find five hundred pounds for a rational friendly expedition; and should parliament be dissolved, you will perhaps find five thousand for ——. I cannot think of it with patience. Pray take serious strenuous measures for sending me a pipe of excellent Madeira in cask, with some dozens of Malmsey Madeira. It should be consigned to Messrs. Romberg Voituriers at Ostend, and I must have timely notice of its march. We have so much to say about France, that I suppose we shall never say anything. That country is now in a state of dissolution. Adieu.

LAUSANNE, *December* 15, 1789.

You have often reason to accuse my strange silence and neglect in the most important of my own affairs; for I will presume to assert, that in a business of yours of equal consequence, you should not find me cold or careless. But on the present occasion my silence is, perhaps, the highest compliment I ever paid you. You remember the answer of Philip of Macedon: "Philip may sleep, while he knows that Parmenio is awake." I expected, and, to say the truth, I wished that my Parmenio would have decided and acted, without expecting my dilatory answer, and in his decision I should have acquiesced with implicit confidence. But since you will have my opinion, let us consider the present state of my affairs. In the course of my life I have often known, and sometimes felt, the difficulty of getting money, but I now find myself involved in a more singular distress, the difficulty of placing it; and if it continues much longer, I shall almost wish for my land again.

I perfectly agree with you that it is bad management to purchase in the funds when they do not yield four pounds per cent.

. . . . . .

Some of this money I can place safely, by means of my banker here; and I shall possess, what I have always desired, a command of cash, which I cannot abuse to my prejudice, since I have it in my power to supply with my pen any extraordinary or fanciful indulgence of expense. And so much, much indeed, for pecuniary matters. What would you have me say of the affairs of France? We are too near, and too remote, to form an accurate judgment of that wonderful scene. The abuses of the Court and Government called aloud for reformation; and it has happened, as it will always happen, that an innocent well-disposed prince has paid the forfeit of the sins of his predecessors; of the ambition of Louis XIV., of the profusion of Louis XV. The French nation had a glorious opportunity, but they have abused, and may lose their advantages. If they had been content with a liberal translation of our system, if they had respected the prerogatives of the Crown and the privileges of the nobles, they might have raised a solid fabric on the only true foundation, the natural aristocracy of a great country. How different is the prospect! Their king brought a captive to Paris after his palace had been stained with the blood of his guards; the nobles in exile; the clergy plundered in a way which strikes at the root of all property; the capital an independent republic; the union of the provinces dissolved; the flames of discord kindled by the worst of men (in that light I consider Mirabeau); and the honestest of the Assembly, a set of wild visionaries (like our Dr. Price), who gravely debate, and dream about the establishment of a pure and perfect democracy of five-and-twenty millions, the virtues of the golden age, and the primitive rights and equality of mankind, which would lead, in fair reasoning, to an equal partition of lands and money. How many years must elapse before France can recover any vigour, or resume her station among the Powers of Europe! As yet there is no symptom of a great man, a Richelieu or a Cromwell, arising, either to restore the monarchy, or to lead the commonwealth. The weight of Paris, more deeply engaged in the funds than all the rest of the kingdom, will long delay a bankruptcy; and if it should happen, it will be, both in the cause and the effect, a

measure of weakness rather than of strength. You send me to Chambery, to see a prince and an archbishop. Alas! we have exiles enough here, with the Marshal de Castries and the Duke de Guignes at their head; and this inundation of strangers, which used to be confined to the summer, will now stagnate all the winter. The only ones whom I have seen with pleasure are M. Mounier, the late president of the National Assembly, and the Count de Lally. They have both dined with me. Mounier, who is a serious dry politician, is returned to Dauphiné. Lally is an amiable man of the world, and a poet: he passes the winter here. You know how much I prefer a quiet select society to a crowd of names and titles, and that I always seek conversation with a view to amusement rather than information. What happy countries are England and Switzerland, if they know and preserve their happiness.

I have a thousand things to say to my lady, Maria, and Louisa, but I can add only a short postscript about the Madeira. Good Madeira is now become essential to my health and reputation. May your hogshead prove as good as the last; may it not be intercepted by the rebels or the Austrians. What a scene again in that country! Happy England! Happy Switzerland! I again repeat, adieu.

LAUSANNE, *January* 27, 1790.

Your two last epistles of the 7th and 11th instant were somewhat delayed on the road; they arrived within two days of each other, the last this morning (the 27th), so that I answer by the first, or at least by the second post. Upon the whole, your French method, though sometimes more rapid, appears to me less sure and steady than the old German highway, &c. &c. . . . . .

. . . . . .

But enough of this. A new and brighter prospect seems to be breaking upon us, and few events of that kind have ever given me more pleasure than your successful negotiation and ——'s satisfactory answer. The agreement is, indeed, equally convenient for both parties. No time or expense will be wasted in

scrutinising the title of the estate; the interest will be secured by the clause of five per cent.; and I lament with you that no larger sum than eight thousand pounds can be placed on Beriton without asking (what might be somewhat impudent) a collateral security, &c. &c. . . . . .

. . . . . .

But I wish you to choose and execute one or the other of these arrangements with sage discretion and absolute power. I shorten my letter that I may despatch it by this post. I see the time, and I shall rejoice to see it at the end of twenty years, when my cares will be at an end, and our friendly pages will be no longer sullied with the repetition of dirty land and vile money; when we may expatiate on the politics of the world and our personal sentiments. Without expecting your answer of business, I mean to write soon in a purer style, and I wish to lay open to my friend the state of my mind, which (exclusive of all worldly concerns) is not perfectly at ease. In the meanwhile I must add two or three short articles. 1. I am astonished at Elmsley's silence, and the immobility of your picture. Mine should have departed long since, could I have found a sure opportunity, &c. &c. Adieu. Yours.

LAUSANNE, *May* 15, 1790.

Since the first origin (*ab ovo*) of our connection and correspondence, so long an interval of silence has not intervened, as far as I remember, between us, &c. &c.

From my silence you conclude that the moral complaint which I had insinuated in my last is either insignificant or fanciful. The conclusion is rash. But the complaint in question is of the nature of a slow lingering disease, which is not attended with any immediate danger. As I have not leisure to expatiate, take the idea in three words: "Since the loss of poor Deyverdun I am alone, and even in Paradise solitude is painful to a social mind. When I was a dozen years younger I scarcely felt the weight of a single existence amidst the crowds of London, of parliament, of clubs; but it will press more heavily upon me in this tranquil land, in

the decline of life, and with the increase of infirmities. Some expedient, even the most desperate, must be embraced, to secure the domestic society of a male or female companion. But I am not in a hurry; there is time for reflection and advice." During this winter such finer feelings have been suspended by the grosser evil of bodily pain. On the 9th of February I was seized by such a fit of the gout as I had never known, though I must be thankful that its dire effects have been confined to the feet and knees, without ascending to the more noble parts. With some vicissitudes of better and worse, I have groaned between two and three months; the debility has survived the pain, and though now easy, I am carried about in my chair, without any power, and with a very distant chance of supporting myself, from the extreme weakness and contraction of the joints of my knees. Yet I am happy in a skilful physician and kind, assiduous friends. Every evening, during more than three months, has been enlivened (excepting when I have been forced to refuse them) by some cheerful visits, and very often by a chosen party of both sexes. How different is such society from the solitary evenings which I have passed in the tumult of London! It is not worth while fighting about a shadow, but should I ever return to England, Bath, not the metropolis, would be my last retreat.

Your portrait is at last arrived in perfect condition, and now occupies a conspicuous place over the chimney-glass in my library. It is the object of general admiration; good judges (the few) applaud the work; the name of Reynolds opens the eyes and mouths of the many; and were I not afraid of making you vain, I would inform you that the original is not allowed to be more than five-and-thirty. In spite of private reluctance and public discontent, I have honourably dismissed myself.[1] I shall arrive at Sir Joshua's before the end of the month; he will give me a look, and perhaps a touch, and you will be indebted to the president one guinea for the carriage. Do not be nervous, I am not rolled up; had I been so you might have gazed on my charms four months ago. I want some account of yourself, of my lady

[1] His portrait.

(shall we never directly correspond?), of Louisa, and of Maria. How has the latter since her launch supported a quiet winter in Sussex? I so much rejoice in your divorce from that b—— Kitty Coventry, that I care not what marriage you contract. A great city would suit your dignity, and the duties which would kill me in the first session would supply your activity with a constant fund of amusement. But tread softly and surely; the ice is deceitful, the water is deep, and you may be soused over head and ears before you are aware. Why did not you or Elmsley send me the American pamphlet[1] by the post? It would not have cost much. You have such a knack of turning a nation, that I am afraid you will triumph (perhaps by the force of argument) over justice and humanity. But you do not expect to work at Beelzebub's sugar plantations in the infernal regions under the tender government of a negro driver? I should suppose both my lady and Miss Frith very angry with you.

As to the bill for prints, which has been too long neglected, why will you not exercise the power, which I have never revoked, over all my cash at the Goslings'? The Severy family has passed a very favourable winter. The young man is impatient to hear from a family which he places above all others; yet he will generously write next week, and send you a drawing of the alterations in the house. Do not raise your ideas; you know I am satisfied with convenience in architecture and some elegance in furniture. I admire the coolness with which you ask me to epistolise Reynell and Elmsley, as if a letter were so easy and pleasant a task. It appears less so to me every day.

1790.

Your indignation will melt into pity when you hear that for several weeks past I have been again confined to my chamber and my chair. Yet I must hasten—generously hasten—to exculpate the gout, my old enemy, from the curses which you already pour on his head. He is not the cause of this disorder, although the

[1] Observations on the Project for Abolishing the Slave-Trade, by Lord Sheffield.

consequences have been somewhat similar. I am satisfied that this effort of nature has saved me from a very dangerous, perhaps a fatal, crisis; and I listen to the flattering hope that it may tend to keep the gout at a more respectable distance, &c. &c. &c.

The whole sheet has been filled with dry, selfish business, but I must and will reserve some lines of the cover for a little friendly conversation. I passed four days at the castle of Copet with Necker, and could have wished to have shown him, as a warning, to any aspiring youth possessed with the demon of ambition. With all the means of private happiness in his power, he is the most miserable of human beings: the past, the present, and the future are equally odious to him. When I suggested some domestic amusements of books, building, &c., he answered, with a deep tone of despair, "Dans l'êtat ou je suis, je ne puis sentir que le coup de vent qui m'a abattu." How different from the careless cheerfulness with which our poor friend Lord North supported his fall! Madame Necker maintains more external composure, *mais le Diable n'y perd rien.* It is true that Necker wished to be carried into the closet, like old Pitt, on the shoulders of the people, and that he has been ruined by the democracy which he had raised. I believe him to be an able financier, and know him to be an honest man; too honest, perhaps, for a Minister. His rival Calonne has passed through Lausanne, in his way from Turin, and was soon followed by the Prince of Condé, with his son and grandson; but I was too much indisposed to see them. They have, or have had, some wild projects of a counter-revolution; horses have been bought, men levied. Such foolish attempts must end in the ruin of the party. Burke's book is a most admirable medicine against the French disease, which has made too much progress even in this happy country. I admire his eloquence, I approve his politics, I adore his chivalry, and I can forgive even his superstition. The primitive Church, which I have treated with some freedom, was itself at that time an innovation, and I was attached to the old Pagan establishment. The French spread so many lies about the sentiments of the English nation, that I wish the most considerable men of all parties and descriptions

would join in some public act, declaring themselves satisfied and resolved to support our present constitution. Such a declaration would have a wonderful effect in Europe; and, were I thought worthy, I myself would be proud to subscribe it. I have a great mind to send you something of a sketch, such as all thinking men might adopt.

I have intelligence of the approach of my Madeira. I accept with equal pleasure the second pipe, now in the torrid zone. Send me some pleasant details of your domestic state, of Maria, &c. If my lady thinks that my silence is a mark of indifference, my lady is a goose. I must have you all at Lausanne next summer.

LAUSANNE, *August* 7, 1790.

I answer at once your two letters; and I should probably have taken earlier notice of the first, had I not been in daily expectation of the second. I must begin on the subject of what really interests me the most, your glorious election for Bristol. Most sincerely do I congratulate your exchange of a cursed expensive jilt, who deserted you for a rich Jew, for an honourable connection with a chaste and virtuous matron, who will probably be as constant as she is disinterested. In the whole range of election from Caithness to St. Ives, I much doubt whether there be a single choice so truly honourable to the member and the constituents. The second commercial city invites, from a distant province, an independent gentleman, known only by his active spirit and his writings on the subject of trade, and names him, without intrigue or expense, for her representative; even the voice of party is silenced, while factions strive which shall applaud the most.

You are now sure, for seven years to come, of never wanting food—I mean business. What a crowd of suitors or complainants will besiege your door! What a load of letters and memorials will be heaped on your table! I much question whether even you will not sometimes exclaim, *Oh! jam satis est!* but that is your affair. Of the excursion to Coventry I cannot decide, but I hear it is pretty generally blamed; but, however, I love gratitude

to an old friend, and shall not be very angry if you damned them with a farewell to all eternity. But I cannot repress my indignation at the use of those foolish, obsolete, odious words, Whig and Tory. In the American war they might have some meaning; and then your lordship was a Tory, although you supposed yourself a Whig. Since the Coalition, all general principles have been confounded; and if there ever was an opposition to men, not measures, it is the present. Luckily both the leaders are great men; and whatever happens, the country must fall upon its legs. What a strange mist of peace and war seems to hang over the ocean! We can perceive nothing but secrecy and vigour, but those are excellent qualities to perceive in a Minister. From yourself and politics I now return to my private concerns, which I shall methodically consider under the three great articles of mind, body, and estate.

1. I am not absolutely displeased at your firing so hastily at the hint—a tremendous hint—in my last letter. But the danger is not so serious or imminent as you seem to suspect; and I give you my word that, before I take the slightest step which can bind me either in law, conscience, or honour, I will faithfully communicate, and we will freely discuss, the whole state of the business. But at present there is not anything to communicate or discuss; I do assure you that I have not any particular object in view; I am not in love with any of the hyenas of Lausanne, though there are some who keep their claws tolerably well pared. Sometimes, in a solitary mood, I have fancied myself married to one or another of those whose society and conversation are the most pleasing to me; but when I have painted in my fancy all the probable consequences of such an union, I have started from my dream, rejoiced in my escape, and ejaculated a thanksgiving that I was still in possession of my natural freedom. Yet I feel, and shall continue to feel, that domestic solitude, however it may be alleviated by the world, by study, and even by friendship, is a comfortless state, which will grow more painful as I descend in the vale of years. At present my situation is very tolerable; and if at dinner-time, or at my return home in the evening, I sometimes

sigh for a companion, there are many hours and many occasions in which I enjoy the superior blessing of being sole master of my own house. But your plan, though less dangerous, is still more absurd than mine. Such a couple as you describe could not be found, and, if found, would not answer my purpose; their rank and position would be awkward and ambiguous to myself and my acquaintance; and the agreement of three persons of three characters would be still more impracticable. My plan of Charlotte Porten is undoubtedly the most desirable; and she might either remain a spinster (the case is not without example), or marry some Swiss of my choice, who would increase and enliven our society; and both would have the strongest motives for kind and dutiful behaviour. But the mother has been indirectly sounded, and will not hear of such a proposal for some years. On my side, I would not take her, but as a piece of soft wax which I could model to the language and manners of the country. I must therefore be patient.

Young Severy's letter, which may now be in your hands, and which for these three or four last posts has furnished my indolence with a new pretence for delay, has already informed you of the means and circumstances of my resurrection. Tedious indeed was my confinement, since I was not able to move from my house or chair from the 9th of February to the 1st of July—very nearly five months. The first weeks were accompanied with more pain than I have ever known in the gout, with anxious days and sleepless nights, and when that pain subsided it left a weakness in my knees which seemed to have no end. My confinement was, however, softened by books, by the possession of every comfort and convenience, by a succession each evening of agreeable company, and by a flow of equal spirits and general good health. During the last weeks I descended to the ground floor, poor Deyverdun's apartment, and constructed a chair like Merlin's, in which I could wheel myself in the house and on the terrace. My patience has been universally admired, yet how many thousands have passed those five months less easily than myself! I remember making a remark perfectly simple and perfectly true: "At

present," I said to Madame de Severy, "I am not positively miserable, and I may reasonably hope a daily or weekly improvement, till sooner or later in the summer I shall recover new limbs and new pleasures which I do not now possess. Have any of you such a prospect?" The prediction has been accomplished, and I have arrived to my present condition of strength, or rather of feebleness. I now can walk with tolerable ease in my garden and smooth places, but on the rough pavement of the town I use, and perhaps shall use, a sedan-chair. The Pyrmont waters have performed wonders, and my physician (not Tissot, but a very sensible man) allows me to hope that the term of the interval will be in proportion to that of the fit.

Have you read in the English papers that the Government of Berne is overturned, and that we are divided into three democratical leagues? True as what I have read in the French papers, that the English have cut off Pitt's head and abolished the House of Lords. The people of this country are happy; and in spite of some miscreants, and more foreign emissaries, they are sensible of their happiness.

Finally, inform my lady that I am indignant at a false and heretical assertion in her last letter to Severy, "that friends at a distance cannot love each other if they do not write." I love her better than any woman in the world—indeed I do—and yet I do not write. And she herself—but I am calm. We have now nearly a hundred French exiles, some of them worth being acquainted with, particularly a Count de Schomberg, who is become almost my friend. He is a man of the world, of letters, and of sufficient age, since in 1753 he succeeded to Marshal Saxe's regiment of dragoons. As to the rest, I entertain them, and they flatter me; but I wish we were reduced to our Lausanne society. Poor France! the State is dissolved, the nation is mad! Adieu.

LAUSANNE, *April* 9, 1791.

First, of my health. It is now tolerably restored; my legs are still weak, but the animal in general is in a sound and lively condition, and we have great hopes from the fine weather and the

Pyrmont waters. I most sincerely wished for the presence of Maria to embellish a ball which I gave the 29th of last month to all the best company, natives and foreigners, of Lausanne, with the aid of the Severys, especially of the mother and son, who directed the economy and performed the honours of the *fête*. It opened about seven in the evening; the assembly of men and women was pleased and pleasing, the music good, the illumination splendid, the refreshments profuse. At twelve, one hundred and thirty persons sat down to a very good supper; at two I stole away to bed, in a snug corner; and I was informed at breakfast that the remains of the veteran and young troops, with Severy and his sister at their head, had concluded the last dance about a quarter before seven. This magnificent entertainment has gained me great credit, and the expense was more reasonable than you can easily imagine. This was an extraordinary event, but I give frequent dinners, and in the summer I have an assembly every Sunday evening. What a wicked wretch! says my lady.

I cannot pity you for the accumulation of business, as you ought not to pity me if I complained of the tranquillity of Lausanne. We suffer or enjoy the effects of our own choice. Perhaps you will mutter something of our not being born for ourselves, of public spirit (I have formerly read of such a thing), of private friendship, for which I give you full and ample credit, &c. But your parliamentary operations, at least, will probably expire in the month of June, and I shall refuse to sign the Newhaven conveyance unless I am satisfied that you will execute the Lausanne visit this summer. On the 15th of June, suppose Lord, Lady, Maria, and maid (poor Louisa!), in a post-coach, with Elienne on horseback, set out from Downing Street or Sheffield Place, cross the Channel from Brighton to Dieppe, visit the National Assembly, buy caps at Paris, examine the ruins of Versailles, and arrive at Lausanne without danger or fatigue the second week in July. You will be lodged pleasantly and comfortably, and will not perhaps despise my situation. A couple of months will roll, alas! too hastily away; you will all be amused by new scenes, new people; and whenever Maria and you, with Severy, mount on horseback

to visit the country, the glaciers, &c., my lady and myself shall form a very quiet *tête-à-tête* at home. In September, if you are tired, you may return by a direct or indirect way; but I only desire that you will not make the plan impracticable by grasping at too much. In return, I promise you a visit of three or four months in the autumn of '92. You and my booksellers are now my principal attractions in England. You had some right to growl at hearing of my supplement in the papers, but Cadell's indiscretion was founded on a hint which I had thrown out in a letter, and which in all probability will never be executed. Yet I am not totally idle. Adieu.

LAUSANNE, *May* 18, 1791.

I write a short letter, on small paper, to inform you that the various deeds, which arrived safe and in good condition, have this morning been sealed, signed, and delivered in the presence of respectable and well-known English witnesses. To have read the aforesaid acts would have been difficult; to have understood them, impracticable. I therefore signed them with my eyes shut, and in that implicit confidence which we freemen and Britons are humbly content to yield to our lawyers and Ministers. I hope, however, most seriously hope, that everything has been carefully examined, and that I am not totally ruined. It is not without much impatience that I expect an account of the payment and investment of the purchase-money. It was my intention to have added a new edition of my Will, but I have an unexpected call to go to Geneva to-morrow with the Severys, and must defer that business a few days till after my return. On my return I may possibly find a letter from you, and will write more fully in answer. My posthumous work, contained in a single sheet, will not ruin you in postage. In the meanwhile, let me desire you either never to talk of Lausanne or to execute the journey this summer. After the despatch of public and private business, there can be no real obstacle but in yourself. Pray do not go to war with Russia; it is very foolish. I am quite angry with Pitt. Adieu.

LAUSANNE, *May* 31, 1791.

At length I see a ray of sunshine breaking from a dark cloud. Your epistle of the 13th arrived this morning, the 25th instant, the day after my return from Geneva. It has been communicated to Severy. We now believe that you intend a visit to Lausanne this summer, and we hope that you will execute that intention. If you are a man of honour, you shall find me one; and on the day of your arrival at Lausanne I will ratify my engagement of visiting the British Isles before the end of the year 1792, excepting only the fair and foul exception of the gout. You rejoice me by proposing the addition of dear Louisa; it was not without a bitter pang that I threw her overboard to lighten the vessel and secure the voyage. I was fearful of the governess, a second carriage, and a long train of difficulty and expense, which might have ended in blowing up the whole scheme. But if you can bodkin the sweet creature into the coach, she will find an easy welcome at Lausanne. The first arrangements which I must make before your arrival may be altered by your own taste on a survey of the premises, and you will all be commodiously and pleasantly lodged. You have heard a great deal of the beauty of my house, garden, and situation; but such are their intrinsic value, that, unless I am much deceived, they will bear the test even of exaggerated praise. From my knowledge of your lordship, I have always entertained some doubt how you would get through the society of a Lausanne winter, but I am satisfied that, exclusive of friendship, your summer visits to the banks of the Leman Lake will long be remembered as one of the most agreeable periods of your life, and that you will scarcely regret the amusement of a Sussex Committee of Navigation in the dog-days. You ask for details. What details? A map of France and a post-book are easy and infallible guides. If the ladies are not afraid of the ocean, you are not ignorant of the passage from Brighton to Dieppe. Paris will then be in your direct road; and even allowing you to look at the Pandemonium, the ruins of Versailles, &c., a fortnight diligently employed will clear you from Sheffield Place to Gibbon Castle. What can I say more?

As little have I to say on the subject of my worldly matters, which seem now, Jupiter be praised! to be drawing towards a final conclusion, since when people part with their money they are indeed serious. I do not perfectly understand the ratio of the precise sum which you have poured into Gosling's reservoir, but suppose it will be explained in a general account.

You have been very dutiful in sending me, what I have always desired, a cut Woodfall on a remarkable debate—a debate, indeed, most remarkable! Poor —— is the most eloquent and rational madman that I ever knew. I love ——'s feelings, but I detest the political principles of the man, and of the party. Formerly you detested them more strongly, during the American war, than myself. I am half afraid that you are corrupted by your unfortunate connections. Should you admire the National Assembly, we shall have many an altercation, for I am as high an aristocrat as Burke himself; and he has truly observed that it is impossible to debate with temper on the subject of that cursed Revolution. In my last excursion to Geneva I frequently saw the Neckers, who by this time are returned to their summer residence at Copet. He is much restored in health and spirits, especially since the publication of his last book, which has probably reached England. Both parties, who agree in abusing him, agree likewise that he is a man of virtue and genius; but I much fear that the purest intentions have been productive of the most baneful consequences. Our military men—I mean the French—are leaving us every day for the camp of the Princes at Worms, and support what is called representation. Their hopes are sanguine; I will not answer for their being well grounded. It is certain, however, that the Emperor had an interview the 19th instant with the Count of Artois at Mantua; and the aristocrats talk in mysterious language of Spain, Sardinia, the Empire, four or five armies, &c. They will doubtless strike a blow this summer. May it not recoil on their own heads! Adieu. Embrace our female travellers. A short delay!

LAUSANNE, *June* 12, 1791.

I now begin to see you all in real motion, swimming from Brighton to Dieppe, according to my scheme, and afterwards treading the direct road, which you cannot well avoid, to the turbulent capital of the late kingdom of France. I know not what more to say, or what further instructions to send; they would indeed be useless, as you are travelling through a country which has been sometimes visited by Englishmen. Only this let me say, that in the midst of anarchy the roads were never more secure than at present. As you will wish to assist at the National Assembly, you will act prudently in obtaining from the French in London a good recommendation to some leading member; Cazales, for instance, or the Abbé Maury. I soon expect from Elmsley a cargo of books; but you may bring me any new pamphlet of exquisite flavour, particularly the last works of John Lord Sheffield, which the dog has always neglected to send. You will have time to write once more, and you must endeavour, as nearly as possible, to mark the day of your arrival. You may come either by Lyons and Geneva, by Dijon and Les Rousses, or by Dôle and Pontarlier. The post will fail you on the edge of Switzerland, and must be supplied by hired horses. I wish you to make your last day's journey easy, so as to dine upon the road and arrive by tea-time. The pulse of the counter-revolution beats high, but I cannot send you any certain facts. Adieu. I want to hear my lady abusing me for never writing. All the Severys are very impatient.

Notwithstanding the high premium, I do not absolutely wish you drowned. Besides all other cares, I must marry and propagate, which would give me a great deal of trouble.

LAUSANNE, *July* 1, 1791.

In obedience to your orders, I direct a flying shot to Paris, though I have not anything particular to add, excepting that our impatience is increased in the inverse ratio of time and space. Yet I almost doubt whether you have passed the sea. The news

of the King of France's escape must have reached you before the 28th, the day of your departure, and the prospect of strange, unknown disorder may well have suspended your firmest resolves. The Royal animal is again caught, and all may probably be quiet. I was just going to exhort you to pass through Brussels and the confines of Germany—a fair Irishism, since, if you read this, you are already at Paris. The only reasonable advice which now remains, is to obtain, by means of Lord Gower, a sufficiency, or even superfluity, of forcible passports, such as leave no room for cavil on a jealous frontier. The frequent intercourse with Paris has proved that the best and shortest road, instead of Besançon, is by Dijon, Dôle, Les Rousses, and Nyon. Adieu. I warmly embrace the ladies. It would be idle now to talk of business.

LETTERS

FROM

EDWARD GIBBON, Esq.,

TO

LORD SHEFFIELD, LADY SHEFFIELD,

AND

MISS HOLROYD.

LETTERS.

EDWARD GIBBON, Esq., *to the* Hon. MISS HOLROYD.

LAUSANNE, *9th Nov.* 1791.

GULLIVER is made to say, in presenting his interpreter, "My tongue is in the mouth of my friend." Allow me to say, with proper expressions and excuses, "My pen is in the hand of my friend;" and the aforesaid friend begs leave thus to continue.[1]

I remember to have read somewhere in Rousseau of a lover quitting very often his mistress, to have the pleasure of corresponding with her. Though not absolutely your lover, I am very much your admirer, and should be extremely tempted to follow the same example. The spirit and reason which prevail in your conversation appear to great advantage in your letters. The three which I have received from Berne, Coblentz, and Brussels have given me much real pleasure; first, as a proof that you are often thinking of me; secondly, as an evidence that you are capable of keeping a resolution; and thirdly, from their own intrinsic merit and entertainment. The style, without any allowance for haste or hurry, is perfectly correct; the manner is neither too light nor too grave; the dimensions neither too long nor too short: they are such, in a word, as I should like to receive from the daughter of my best friend. I attend your lively journal through bad roads and worse inns. Your description of men and manners conveys very satisfactory information, and I am particu-

[1] The remainder of the letter was dictated by Mr. Gibbon, and written by M. Wilh. de Severy.—S.

larly delighted with your remark concerning the irregular behaviour of the Rhine. But the Rhine, alas! after some temporary wanderings, will be content to flow in his old channel, while man —man is the greatest fool of the whole creation.

I direct this letter to Sheffield Place, where, I suppose, you arrived in health and safety. I congratulate my lady on her quiet establishment by her fireside, and hope you will be able, after all your excursions, to support the climate and manners of Old England. Before this epistle reaches you I hope to have received the two promised letters from Dover and Sheffield Place. If they should not meet with a proper return, you will pity and forgive me. I have not yet heard from Lord Sheffield, who seems to have devolved on his daughter the task which she has so gloriously executed. I shall probably not write to him till I have received his first letter of business from England; but with regard to my lady, I have most excellent intentions.

I never could understand how two persons of such superior merit as Miss Holroyd and Miss Lausanne could have so little relish for one another as they appeared to have in the beginning, and it was with great pleasure that I observed the degrees of their growing intimacy and the mutual regret of their separation. Whatever you may imagine, your friends at Lausanne have been thinking as frequently of yourself and company as you could possibly think of them; and you will be very ungrateful if you do not seriously resolve to make them a second visit, under such name and title as you may judge most agreeable. None of the Severy family, except perhaps my secretary, are inclined to forget you, and I am continually asked for some account of your health, motions, and amusements. Since your departure no great events have occurred. I have made a short excursion to Geneva and Copet, and found Mr. Necker in much better spirits than when you saw him. They pressed me to pass some weeks this winter in their house at Geneva, and I may possibly comply, at least in part, with their invitation. The aspect of Lausanne is peaceful and placid, and you have no hopes of a revolution driving me out of this country. We hear nothing of the proceedings of

the commission,[1] except by playing at cards every evening with Monsieur Fischer, who often speaks of Lord Sheffield with esteem and respect. There is no appearance of Rosset and La Motte being brought to a speedy trial, and they still remain in the castle of Chillon, which, according to the geography of the National Assembly, is washed by the sea. Our winter begins with great severity, and we shall not probably have many balls, which, as you may imagine, I lament much. Angletine does not consider two French words as a letter. Montrond sighs and blushes whenever Louisa's name is mentioned; Philippine wishes to converse with her on men and manners. The French ladies are settled in town for the winter, and they form, with Mrs. Trevor, a very agreeable addition to our society. It is now enlivened by a visit of the Chevalier de Boufflers, one of the most accomplished men in the *ci-devant* kingdom of France.

As Mrs. Wood,[2] who has miscarried, is about to leave us, I must either cure or die; and, upon the whole, I believe the former will be most expedient. You will see her in London, with dear Corea, next winter. My rival magnificently presents me with a hogshead of Madeira, so that in honour I could not supplant him; yet I do assure you from my heart that another departure is much more painful to me. The apartment below[3] is shut up, and I know not when I shall again visit it with pleasure. Adieu. Believe me, one and all, most affectionately yours.

[1] A commission, at the head of which was Monsieur Fischer, one of the principal members of the Government of Berne, a very active and intelligent man, who would have distinguished himself in the administration of any country. This commission, which was accompanied by two or three thousand of the best of the German militia of the canton of Berne, was sent for the purpose of examining into some attempts to introduce the French revolutionary principles into the Pays de Vaud. Several persons were seized; the greater part were released; the examination was secret, but Rosset and La Motte were confined in the castle of Chillon, and being afterwards condemned for correspondence with the French to a long imprisonment, were transferred to the castle of Aarburg.

[2] Madame de Silva.

[3] The apartment principally inhabited during the residence of my family at Lausanne.—S.

EDWARD GIBBON, Esq., *to the* Right Hon. LORD SHEFFIELD.

LAUSANNE, *December* 28, 1791.

Alas! alas! the demon of procrastination has again possessed me. Three months have nearly rolled away since your departure, and seven letters, five from the most valuable Maria, and two from yourself, have extorted from me only a single epistle, which perhaps would never have been written had I not used the permission of employing my own tongue and the hand of a secretary. Shall I tell you that for these last six weeks the eve of every day has witnessed a firm resolution, and the day itself has furnished some ingenious delay? This morning, for instance, I determined to invade you as soon as the breakfast-things should be removed. They were removed; but I had something to read, to write, to meditate, and there was time enough before me. Hour after hour has stolen away, and I finally begin my letter at two o'clock, evidently too late for the post, as I must dress, dine, go abroad, &c. A foundation, however, shall be laid which will stare me in the face, and next Saturday I shall probably be roused by the awful reflection that it is the last day in the year.

After realising this summer an event which I had long considered as a dream of fancy, I know not whether I should rejoice or grieve at your visit to Lausanne. While I possessed the family the sentiment of pleasure highly predominated, when, just as we had subsided in a regular, easy, comfortable plan of life, the last trump sounded, and, without speaking of the pang of separation, you left me to one of the most gloomy, solitary months of October which I have ever passed. For yourself and daughters, however, you have contrived to snatch some of the most interesting scenes of this world. Paris at such a moment, Switzerland, and the Rhine, Strasburg, Coblentz, have suggested a train of lively images and useful ideas which will not be speedily erased. The mind of the young damsel, more especially, will be enlarged and enlightened in every sense. In four months she has lived many years, and she will much deceive and displease me if she does

not review and methodise her journal in such a manner as she is capable of performing for the amusement of her particular friends. Another benefit which will redound from your recent view is, that every place, person, and object about Lausanne are now become familiar and interesting to you. In our future correspondence (do I dare pronounce the word correspondence?) I can talk to you as freely of every circumstance as if it were actually before your eyes. And first, of my own improvements. All those venerable piles of ancient verdure which you admired have been eradicated in one fatal day. Your faithful substitutes, William de Severy and Levade, have never ceased to persecute me, till I signed their death-warrant. Their place is now supplied by a number of picturesque naked poles, the foster-fathers of as many twigs of Platanuses, which may afford a grateful but distant shade to the founder, or to his *seris Nepotibus*. In the meanwhile I must confess that the terrace appears broader, and that I discover a much larger quantity of snow than I should otherwise do. The workmen admire your ingenious plan for cutting out a new bedchamber and book-room; but, on mature consideration, we all unanimously prefer the old scheme of adding a third room on the terrace beyond the library, with two spacious windows and a fireplace between. It will be larger (twenty-eight feet by twenty-one) and pleasanter and warmer; the difference of expense will be much less considerable than I imagined; the door of communication with the library will be artfully buried in the wainscot, and, unless it be opened by my own choice, may always remain a profound secret. Such is the design; but, as it will not be executed before next summer, you have time and liberty to state your objections. I am much colder about the staircase, but it may be finished, according to your idea, for thirty pounds; and I feel they will persuade me. Am I not a very rich man? When these alterations are completed, few authors of six volumes in quarto will be more agreeably lodged than myself. Lausanne is now full and lively; all our native families are returned from the country; and, praised be the Lord! we are infested with few foreigners, either French or

English. Even our Democrats are more reasonable or more discreet; it is agreed to waive the subject of politics, and all seem happy and cordial. I have a grand dinner this week, a supper of thirty or forty people on Twelfth-day, &c.; some concerts have taken place, some balls are talked of; and even Maria would allow (yet it is ungenerous to say even Maria) that the winter scene at Lausanne is tolerably gay and active. I say nothing of the Severys, as Angletine has epistolised Maria last post. She has probably hinted that her brother meditates a short excursion to Turin; that worthy fellow Trevor has given him a pressing invitation to his own house. In the beginning of February I propose going to Geneva for three or four weeks. I shall lodge and eat with the Neckers; my mornings will be my own, and I shall spend my evenings in the society of the place, where I have many acquaintance. This short absence will agitate my stagnant life, and restore me with fresh appetite to my house, my library, and my friends. Before that time (the end of February) what events may happen, or be ready to happen! The National Assembly (compared to which the former was a senate of heroes and demi-gods) seem resolved to attack Germany *avec quatre millions de bayonettes libres;* the army of the princes must soon either fight, or starve, or conquer. Will Sweden draw his sword? Will Russia draw her purse?—an empty purse! All is darkness and anarchy; neither party is strong enough to oppose a settlement; and I cannot see a possibility of an amicable arrangement where there are no heads, in any sense of the word, who can answer for the multitude. Send me your ideas, and those of Lord Guildford, Lord Loughborough, Fox, &c.

Before I conclude, a word of my vexatious affairs. Shall I never sail on the smooth stream of good security and half-yearly interest? Will everybody refuse my money? I had already written to Darrel and Gosling to obey your commands, and was in hopes that you had already made large and salutary evacuations. During your absence I never expected much effect from the cold indifference of agents; but you are now in England—

you will be speedily in London. Set all your setting-dogs to beat the field, hunt, inquire. Why should you not advertise? Yet I am almost ashamed to complain of some stagnation of interest when I am witness to the natural and acquired philosophy of so many French who are reduced from riches, not to indigence, but to absolute want and beggary. A Count Argout has just left us who possessed ten thousand a year in the island of St. Domingo. He is utterly burnt and ruined, and a brother whom he tenderly loved has been murdered by the negroes. These are real misfortunes. I have much revolved the plan of the Memoirs I once mentioned, and as you do not think it ridiculous, I believe I shall make an attempt. If I can please myself, I am confident of not displeasing. But let this be a profound secret between us. People must not be prepared to laugh; they must be taken by surprise. Have you looked over your, or rather my, letters? Surely, in the course of the year, you may find a safe and cheap occasion of sending me a parcel; they may assist me. Adieu. I embrace my lady; send me a favourable account of her health. I kiss the Marmaille. By an amazing push of remorse and diligence I have finished my letter (three pages and a half) this same day since dinner, but I have not time to read it. Ever yours.

Half-past six.

To the Same.

LAUSANNE, *December* 31, 1791.

To-morrow a new year, *multos et felices!*

I now most sincerely repent of my late repentance, and do almost swear never to renounce the amiable and useful practice of procrastination. Had I delayed, as I was strongly tempted, another post, your missive of the 13th, which did not reach me till this morning (three mails were due), would have arrived in time, and I might have avoided this second herculean labour. It will be, however, no more than an infant Hercules. The topics of conversation have been fully discussed, and I shall now confine myself to the needful of the new business. *Felix faustumque*

sit! May no untoward accident disarrange your Yorkshire mortgage, the conclusion of which will place me in a clear and easy state, such as I have never known since the first hour of property.

. . . . . .

The three per cents. are so high, and the country is in such a damned state of prosperity under that fellow Pitt, that it goes against me to purchase at such low interest. In my visit to England next autumn, or in the spring following (alas! you must acquiesce in the alternative), I hope to be armed with sufficient materials to draw a sum which may be employed as taste or fancy shall dictate in the improvement of my library, a service of plate, &c. I am not very sanguine, but surely this is no uncomfortable prospect. This pecuniary detail, which has not, indeed, been so unpleasant as it used formerly to be, has carried me farther than I expected. Let us now drink and be merry. I flatter myself that your Madeira, improved by its travels, will set forwards for Messrs. Romberg, at Ostend, early in the spring; and I should be very well pleased if you could add a hogshead of excellent claret, for which we should be entitled to the drawback. They must halt at Basle and send notice to me for a safe conduct. Have you had any intelligence from Lord Auckland about the wine which he was to order from Bourdeaux, by Marseilles and the Rhône? The one need not impede the other. I wish to have a large stock. Corea has promised me a hogshead of his native Madeira, for which I am to give him an order on Cadell for a copy of the Decline and Fall. He vanished without notice, and is now at Paris. Could you not fish out his direction by Mrs. Wood, who by this time is in England? I rejoice in Lally's prosperity. Have you reconsidered my proposal of a declaration of constitutional principles from the heads of the party? I think a foolish address from a body of Whigs to the National Assembly renders it still more incumbent on you. Achieve my worldly concerns, *et eris mihi magnus Apollo.* Adieu. Ever yours.

To the Same.

LAUSANNE, *April* 4, 1792.

For fear you should abuse me, as usual, I will begin the attack and scold at you for not having yet sent me the long-expected intelligence of the completion of the mortgage. You had positively assured me that the 2nd of February would terminate my worldly cares by a consummation so devoutly to be wished. The news, therefore, might reach me about the 18th, and I argued, with the gentle logic of laziness, that it was perfectly idle to answer your letter till I could chaunt a thanksgiving song of gratitude and praise. As every post disappointed my hopes, the same argument was repeated for the next, and twenty empty-handed postillions have blown their insignificant horns, till I am provoked at last to write by sheer impatience and vexation. *Facit indignatio versum. Cospetto di Baccho;* for I must ease myself by swearing a little. What is the cause, the meaning, the pretence, of this delay? Are the Yorkshire mortgagers inconstant in their wishes? Are the London lawyers constant in their procrastination? Is a letter on the road to inform me that all is concluded, or to tell me that all is broken to pieces? Had the money been placed in the three per cents. last May, besides the annual interest, it would have gained by the rise of stock nearly twenty per cent. Your lordship is a wise man, a successful writer, and an useful senator; you understand America and Ireland, corn and slaves, but your prejudice against the funds,[1] in which I am often tempted to join, makes you a little blind to their increasing value in the hands of our virtuous and excellent Minister. But our regret is vain; one pull more and we reach the shore, and our future correspondence will be no longer tainted with business. Shall I then be more diligent and regular? I hope and believe so; for now that I have got over this article of worldly interest, my letter seems to be almost finished. *Apropos* of letters, am I not a sad dog to forget my lady and Maria? Alas! the dual number has been prejudicial to both. "How happy could I be with either, were

[1] It would be more correct if he had said my preference of land.—S.

t'other dear charmer away!" I am like the ass of famous memory; I cannot tell which way to turn first, and there I stand mute and immovable. The baronial and maternal dignity of my lady, supported by twenty years' friendship, may claim the preference. But the five incomparable letters of Maria! Next week, however, —am I not ashamed to talk of next week?

I have most successfully and most agreeably executed my plan of spending the month of March at Geneva, in the Necker-house, and every circumstance that I had arranged turned out beyond my expectation; the freedom of the morning, the society of the table and drawing-room, from half an hour past two till six or seven; an evening assembly and card-party, in a round of the best company; and, excepting one day in the week, a private supper of free and friendly conversation. You would like Geneva better than Lausanne; there is much more information to be got among the men; but though I found some agreeable women, their manners and style of life are, upon the whole, less easy and pleasant than our own. I was much pleased with Necker's brother, M. de Germany, a good-humoured, polite, sensible man, without the genius and fame of the statesman, but much more adapted for private and ordinary happiness. Madame de Stael is expected in a few weeks at Copet, where they receive her, and where, "to dumb forgetfulness a prey," she will have leisure to regret "the pleasing anxious being" which she enjoyed amidst the storms of Paris. But what can the poor creature do? Her husband is in Sweden, her lover is no longer Secretary at War, and her father's house is the only place where she can reside with the least degree of prudence and decency. Of that father I have really a much higher idea than I ever had before; in our domestic intimacy he cast away his gloom and reserve; I saw a great deal of his mind, and all that I saw is fair and worthy. He was overwhelmed by the hurricane; he mistook his way in the fog, but in such a perilous situation I much doubt whether any mortal could have seen or stood. In the meanwhile he is abused by all parties, and none of the French in Geneva will set their foot in his house. He remembers Lord

Sheffield with esteem. His health is good, and he would be tranquil in his private life were not his spirits continually wounded by the arrival of every letter and every newspaper. His sympathy is deeply interested by the fatal consequences of a revolution in which he had acted so leading a part, and he feels as a friend for the danger of M. de Lessart, who may be guilty in the eyes of the Jacobins, or even of his judges, by those very actions and despatches which would be most approved by all the lovers of his country. What a momentous event is the Emperor's death! In the forms of a new reign, and of the Imperial election, the Democrats have at least gained time, if they knew how to use it. But the new monarch, though of a weak complexion, is of a martial temper; he loves the soldiers, and is beloved by them; and the slow, fluctuating politics of his uncle may be succeeded by a direct line of march to the gates of Strasburg and Paris. It is the opinion of the master-movers in France (I know it most certainly) that their troops will not fight, that the people have lost all sense of patriotism, and that on the first discharge of an Austrian cannon the game is up. But what occasion for Austrians or Spaniards? The French are themselves their greatest enemies. Four thousand Marseillois are marched against Arles and Avignon, the *troupes de ligne* are divided between the two parties, and the flame of civil war will soon extend over the southern provinces. You have heard of the unworthy treatment of the Swiss regiment of Ernst? The canton of Berne has bravely recalled them, with a stout letter to the King of France, which must be inserted in all the papers. I now come to the most unpleasant article, our home politics. Bosset and La Motte are condemned to five and twenty years' imprisonment in the fortress of Aarburg. We have not yet received their official sentence, nor is it believed that the proofs and proceedings against them will be published—an awkward circumstance, which it does not seem easy to justify. Some (though none of note) are taken up, several are fled, many more are suspected and suspicious. All are silent, but it is the silence of fear and discontent; and the secret hatred which rankled against

government begins to point against the few who are known to be well-affected. I never knew any place so much changed as Lausanne, even since last year; and though you will not be much obliged to me for the motive, I begin very seriously to think of visiting Sheffield Place by the month of September next. Yet here again I am frightened by the dangers of a French and the difficulties of a German route. You must send me an account of the passage from Dieppe to Brighton, with an itinerary of the Rhine, distances, expenses, &c. As usual, I just save the post; nor have I time to read my letter, which, after wasting the morning in deliberation, has been struck off in a heat since dinner. No news of the Madeira. Your views of S. P. are just received; they are admired, and shall be framed. Severy has spent the Carnival at Turin. Trevor is only the best man in the world.

To the Same.

LAUSANNE, *May* 30, 1792.

After the receipt of your penultimate eight days ago, I expected with much impatience the arrival of your next-promised epistle. It arrived this morning, but has not completely answered my expectations. I wanted, and I hoped for, a full and fair picture of the present and probable aspect of your political world, with which, at this distance, I seem every day less satisfied. In the slave question you triumphed last session; in this you have been defeated. What is the cause of this alteration? If it proceeded only from an impulse of humanity, I cannot be displeased, even with an error, since it is very likely that my own vote (had I possessed one) would have been added to the majority. But in this rage against slavery, in the numerous petitions against the slave-trade, was there no leaven of new democratical principles? —no wild ideas of the rights and natural equality of man? It is these, I fear. Some articles in newspapers, some pamphlets of the year, the Jockey Club, have fallen into my hands. I do not infer much from such publications, yet I have never known them of so black and malignant a cast. I shuddered at Grey's motion,

disliked the half-support of Fox, admired the firmness of Pitt's declaration, and excused the usual intemperance of Burke. Surely such men as ——, ——, —— have talents for mischief. I see a club of reform which contains some respectable names. Inform me of the professions, the principles, the plans, the resources, of these reformers. Will they heat the minds of the people? Does the French Democracy gain no ground? Will the bulk of your party stand firm to their own interest and that of their country? Will you not take some active measures to declare your sound opinions and separate yourselves from your rotten members? If you allow them to perplex government, if you trifle with this solemn business, if you do not resist the spirit of innovation in the first attempt, if you admit the smallest and most specious change in our parliamentary system, you are lost. You will be driven from one step to another; from principles just in theory to consequences most pernicious in practice; and your first concessions will be productive of every subsequent mischief, for which you will be answerable to your country and to posterity. Do not suffer yourselves to be lulled into a false security; remember the proud fabric of the French monarchy. Not four years ago it stood founded, as it might seem, on the rock of time, force, and opinion, supported by the triple aristocracy of the Church, the nobility, and the Parliaments. They are crumbled into dust; they are vanished from the earth. If this tremendous warning has no effect on the men of property in England, if it does not open every eye and raise every arm, you will deserve your fate. If I am too precipitate, enlighten; if I am too desponding, encourage me.

My pen has run into this argument; for, as much a foreigner as you think me, on this momentous subject I feel myself an Englishman.

The pleasure of residing at Sheffield Place is, after all, the first and the ultimate object of my visit to my native country. But when or how will that visit be effected? Clouds and whirlwinds, Austrian Croats and Gallic cannibals, seem on every side to impede my passage. You seem to apprehend the perils or diffi-

culties of the German road, and French peace is more sanguinary than civilised war. I must pass through, perhaps, a thousand republics or municipalities, which neither obey nor are obeyed. The strictness of passports and the popular ferment are much increased since last summer; aristocrat is in every mouth, lanterns hang in every street, and a hasty word or a casual resemblance may be fatal. Yet, on the other hand, it is probable that many English, men, women, and children, will traverse the country without any accident before next September; and I am sensible that many things appear more formidable at a distance than on a nearer approach. Without any absolute determination, we must see what the events of the next three or four months will produce. In the meanwhile I shall expect with impatience your next letter. Let it be speedy; my answer shall be prompt.

You will be glad, or sorry, to learn that my gloomy apprehensions are much abated, and that my departure, whenever it takes place, will be an act of choice rather than of necessity. I do not pretend to affirm that secret discontent, dark suspicion, private animosity, are very materially assuaged; but we have not experienced, nor do we now apprehend, any dangerous acts of violence which may compel me to seek a refuge among the friendly Bears,[1] and to abandon my library to the mercy of the Democrats. The firmness and vigour of Government have crushed, at least for a time, the spirit of innovation, and I do not believe that the body of the people, especially the peasants, are disposed for a revolution. From France, praised be the demon of anarchy! the insurgents of the Pays de Vaud could not at present have much to hope; and should the *Gardes Nationales*, of which there is little appearance, attempt an incursion, the country is armed and prepared, and they would be resisted with equal numbers and superior discipline. The Gallic wolves that prowled round Geneva are drawn away, some to the south and some to the north, and the late events in Flanders seem to have diffused a general contempt, as well as abhorrence, for the lawless savages who fly before the enemy, hang their prisoners, and murder their officers.

[1] Berne.

The brave and patient regiment of Ernst is expected home every day, and as Berne will take them into present pay, that veteran and regular corps will add to the security of our frontier.

I rejoice that we have so little to say on the subject of worldly affairs. . . . This summer we are threatened with an inundation, besides many nameless English and Irish; but I am anxious for the Duchess of Devonshire and the Lady Elizabeth Foster, who are on their march. Lord Malmesbury, the *audacieux* Harris, will inform you that he has seen me. Him I would have consented to keep.

One word more before we part. Call upon Mr. John Nicholls, bookseller and printer, at Cicero's Head, Red Lion Passage, Fleet Street, and ask him whether he did not, about the beginning of March, receive a very polite letter from Mr. Gibbon of Lausanne. To which, either as a man of business or a civil gentleman, he should have returned an answer. My application related to a domestic article in the *Gentleman's Magazine* of August 1788 (p. 698), which had lately fallen into my hands, and concerning which I requested some further lights. Mrs. Moss delivered the letters[1] into my hands, but I doubt whether they will be of much service to me; the work appears far more difficult in the execution than in the idea, and as I am now taking my leave for some time of the library, I shall not make much progress in the memoirs of P. P. till I am on English ground. But is it indeed true that I shall eat any Sussex pheasants this autumn? The event is in the Book of Fate, and I cannot unroll the leaves of September and October. Should I reach Sheffield Place, I hope to find the whole family in a perfect state of existence, except a certain Maria Holroyd, my fair and generous correspondent, whose annihilation on proper terms I most fervently desire. I must receive a copious answer before the end of next month, June, and again call upon you for a map of your political world. The Chancellor roars; does he break his chain? *Vale.*

[1] His letters to me for a certain period, which he desired me to send, to assist him in writing his Memoirs.—S.

To the Same.

LAUSANNE, *August* 23, 1792.

When I inform you that the design of my English expedition is at last postponed till another year you will not be much surprised. The public obstacles, the danger of one road and the difficulties of another, would alone be sufficient to arrest so unwieldy and inactive a being; and these obstacles, on the side of France, are growing every day more insuperable. On the other hand, the terrors which might have driven me from hence have in a great measure subsided, our State prisoners are forgotten, the country begins to recover its old good-humour and unsuspecting confidence, and the last revolution of Paris appears to have convinced almost everybody of the fatal consequences of democratical principles, which lead by a path of flowers into the abyss of hell. I may therefore wait with patience and tranquillity till the Duke of Brunswick shall have opened the French road. But if I am not driven from Lausanne, you will ask, I hope with some show of indignation, whether I am not drawn to England, and more especially to Sheffield Place? The desire of embracing you and yours is now the strongest, and must gradually become the sole, inducement that can force me from my library and garden over seas and mountains. The English world will forget and be forgotten, and every year will deprive me of some acquaintance who by courtesy are styled friends—Lord Guildford and Sir Joshua Reynolds! two of the men and two of the houses in London on whom I the most relied for the comforts of society.

September 12, 1792.

Thus far had I written in the full confidence of finishing and sending my letter the next post; but six post days have unaccountably slipped away, and were you not accustomed to my silence, you would almost begin to think me on the road. How dreadfully, since my last date, has the French road been polluted with blood! and what horrid scenes may be acting at this moment, and may still be aggravated, till the Duke of Brunswick is master of Paris! On every rational principle of calculation he must

succeed; yet sometimes, when my spirits are low, I dread the blind efforts of mad and desperate multitudes fighting on their own ground. A few days or weeks must decide the military operations of this year, and perhaps for ever; but on the fairest supposition, I cannot look forward to any firm settlement, either of a legal or an absolute government. I cannot pretend to give you any Paris news. Should I inform you, as we believe, that Lally is still among the cannibals, you would possibly answer that he is now sitting in the library at Sheffield. Madame de Stael, after miraculously escaping through pikes and poniards, has reached the castle of Copet, where I shall see her before the end of the week. If anything can provoke the King of Sardinia and the Swiss, it must be the foul destruction of his cousin, Madame de Lamballe, and of their regiment of guards. An extraordinary council is summoned at Berne, but resentment may be checked by prudence. In spite of Maria's laughter, I applaud your moderation, and sigh for a hearty union of all the sense and property of the country. The times require it; but your last political letter was a cordial to my spirits. The Duchess of D. rather dislikes a coalition—amiable creature! The Eliza (we call her Bess) is furious against you for not writing. We shall lose them in a few days, but the motions of Bess and the Duchess for Italy or England are doubtful. Ladies Spencer and Duncannon certainly pass the Alps. I live with them. Adieu. Since I do not appear in person, I feel the absolute propriety of writing to my lady and Maria; but there is far from the knowledge to the performance of a duty. Ever yours.

To the Same.

LAUSANNE, *October* 5, 1792.

As our English newspapers must have informed you of the invasion of Savoy by the French, and as it is possible that you may have some trifling apprehensions of my being killed and eaten by those cannibals, it has appeared to me that a short extraordinary despatch might not be unacceptable on this occasion. It is

indeed true that about ten days ago the French army of the South, under the command of M. de Montesquieu (if any French army can be said to be under any command), has entered Savoy, and possessed themselves of Chambery, Montmeillan, and several other places. It has always been the practice of the King of Sardinia to abandon his transalpine dominions, but on this occasion the Court of Turin appears to have been surprised by the strange eccentric motions of a democracy which always acts from the passion of the moment, and their inferior troops have retreated with some loss and disgrace into the passes of the Alps. Mont Cenis is now impervious, and our English travellers who are bound for Italy, the Duchess of Devonshire, Ancaster, &c., will be forced to explore a long circuitous road through the Tyrol. But the Chablais is yet intact, nor can our telescopes discover the tricolour banners on the other side of the lake. Our accounts of the French numbers seem to vary from fifteen to thirty thousand men; the regulars are few, but they are followed by a rabble rout, which must soon, however, melt away, as they will find no plunder, and scanty subsistence, in the poverty and barrenness of Savoy.

N.B.—I have just seen a letter from M. de Montesquieu, who boasts that at his first entrance into Savoy he had only twelve battalions. Our intelligence is far from correct.

The magistrates of Geneva were alarmed by this dangerous neighbourhood, and more especially by the well-known animosity of an exiled citizen, Clavière, who is one of the six ministers of the French republic. It was carried by a small majority in the General Council to call in the succour of three thousand Swiss, which is stipulated by ancient treaty. The strongest reason or pretence of the minority was founded on the danger of provoking the French, and they seem to have been justified by the event, since the complaint of the French resident amounts to a declaration of war. The fortifications of Geneva are not contemptible, especially on the side of Savoy; and it is much doubted whether M. de Montesquieu is prepared for a regular siege. But the malcontents are numerous within the walls, and I question whether the spirits of the citizens will hold out against a bombardment. In the

meanwhile the Diet has declared that the first cannon fired against Geneva will be considered as an act of hostility against the whole Helvetic body. Berne, as the nearest and most powerful canton, has taken the lead with great vigour and vigilance; the road is filled with the perpetual succession of troops and artillery, and if some disaffection lurks in the towns, the peasants, especially the Germans, are inflamed with a strong desire of encountering the murderers of their countrymen. M. de Watteville, with whom you dined at my house last year, refused to accept the command of the Swiss succour of Geneva till it was made his first instruction that he should never in any case surrender himself prisoner of war.

In this situation, you may suppose that we have some fears. I have great dependence, however, on the many chances in our favour, the valour of the Swiss, the return of the Piedmontese with their Austrian allies, eight or ten thousand men from the Milanese, a diversion from Spain, the great events (how slowly they proceed) on the side of Paris, the inconstancy and want of discipline of the French, and the near approach of the winter season. I am not nervous, but I will not be rash. It will be painful to abandon my house and library; but if the danger should approach, I will retreat before it, first to Berne, and gradually to the north. Should I even be forced to take refuge in England (a violent measure so late in the year), you would perhaps receive me as kindly as you do the French priests—a noble act of hospitality. Could I have foreseen this storm, I would have been there six weeks ago; but who can foresee the wild measures of the savages of Gaul? We thought ourselves perfectly out of the hurricane latitudes. Adieu. I am going to bed, and must rise early to visit the Neckers at Rolle, whither they have retired, from the frontier situation of Copet. Severy is on horseback, with his dragoons. His poor father is dangerously ill. It will be shocking if it should be found necessary to remove him. While we are in this very awkward crisis, I will write at least every week. Ever yours. Write instantly, and remember all my commissions.

To the Same.

I will keep my promise of sending you a weekly journal of our troubles, that, when the piping times of peace are restored, I may sleep in long and irreproachable silence; but I shall use a smaller paper, as our military exploits will seldom be sufficient to fill the ample size of our English quarto.

October 13, 1792.

Since my last of the 6th, our attack is not more imminent, and our defence is most assuredly stronger, two very important circumstances at a time when every day is leading us, though not so fast as our impatience could wish, towards the unwarlike month of November; and we observe with pleasure that the troops of M. de Montesquieu, which are chiefly from the southern provinces, will not cheerfully entertain the rigour of an alpine winter. The 7th instant, M. de Chateauneuf, the French resident, took his leave with an haughty mandate, commanding the Genevois, as they valued their safety and the friendship of the republic, to dismiss their Swiss allies, and to punish the magistrates who had traitorously proposed the calling in these foreign troops. It is precisely the fable of the wolves, who offered to make peace with the sheep, provided they would send away their dogs. You know what became of the sheep. This demand appears to have kindled a just and general indignation, since it announced an edict of proscription, and must lead to a democratical revolution, which would probably renew the horrid scenes of Paris and Avignon. A general assembly of the citizens was convened, the message was read, speeches were made, oaths were taken, and it was resolved (with only three dissentient voices) to live and die in the defence of their country. The Genevois muster above three thousand well-armed citizens; and the Swiss, who may easily be increased, in a few hours, to an equal number, add spirit to the timorous, and confidence to the well-affected: their arsenals are filled with arms, their magazines with ammunition, and their granaries with corn. But their fortifications are extensive and imperfect, they are commanded from two adjacent hills; a French

faction lurks in the city, the character of the Genevois is rather commercial than military, and their behaviour, lofty promise, and base surrender in the year 1782 is fresh in our memories. In the meanwhile 4000 French at the most are arrived in the neighbouring camp, nor is there yet any appearance of mortars or heavy artillery. Perhaps an haughty menace may be repelled by a firm countenance. If it were worth while talking of justice, what a shameful attack of a feeble, unoffending state! On the news of their danger, all Switzerland, from Schaffhausen to the Pays de Vaud, has risen in arms; and a French resident, who has passed through the country, in his way from Ratisbon, declares his intention of informing and admonishing the National Convention. About eleven thousand Bernois are already posted in the neighbourhood of Copet and Nyon; and new reinforcements of men, artillery, &c., arrive every day. Another army is drawn together to oppose M. de Ferrières, on the side of Bienne and the bishopric of Basle; and the Austrians in Swabia would be easily persuaded to cross the Rhine in our defence. But we are yet ignorant whether our sovereigns mean to wage an offensive or defensive war. If the latter, which is more likely, will the French begin the attack? Should Genoa yield to fear or force, this country is open to an invasion; and though our men are brave, we want generals; and I despise the French much less than I did two months ago. It should seem that our hopes from the King of Sardinia and the Austrians of Milan are faint and distant; Spain sleeps; and the Duke of Brunswick (amazement!) seems to have failed in his great project. For my part, till Geneva falls, I do not think of a retreat; but at all events, I am provided with two strong horses, and an hundred louis in gold. Zurich would be probably my winter quarters, and the society of the Neckers would make any place agreeable. Their situation is worse than mine: I have no daughter ready to lie in; nor do I fear the French aristocrats on the road. Adieu. Keep my letters; excuse contradictions and repetitions. The Duchess of Devonshire leaves us next week. Lady Elizabeth abhors you. —Ever yours.

To the Same.

October 20, 1792.

Since my last, our affairs take a more pacific turn; but I will not venture to affirm that our peace will be either safe or honourable. M. de Montesquieu and three commissioners of the Convention who are at Carrouges, have had frequent conferences with the magistrates of Geneva; several expresses have been despatched to and from Paris, and every step of the negotiation is communicated to the deputies of Berne and Zurich. The French troops observe a very tolerable degree of order and discipline; and no act of hostility has yet been committed on the territory of Geneva.

October 27.

My usual temper very readily admitted the excuse, that it would be better to wait another week, till the final settlement of our affairs. The treaty is signed between France and Geneva; and the ratification of the Convention is looked upon as assured, if anything can be assured in that wild democracy. On condition that the Swiss garrison, with the approbation of Berne and Zurich, be recalled before the first of December, it is stipulated that the independence of Geneva shall be preserved inviolate; that M. de Montesquieu shall immediately send away his heavy artillery; and that no French troops shall approach within ten leagues of the city. As the Swiss have acted only as auxiliaries, they have no occasion for a direct treaty; but they cannot prudently disarm, till they are satisfied of the pacific intentions of France; and no such satisfaction can be given till they have acknowledged the new republic, which they will probably do in a few days, with a deep groan of indignation and sorrow; it has been cemented with the blood of their countrymen! But when the Emperor, the King of Prussia, the first general, and the first army in Europe have failed, less powerful States may acquiesce without dishonour in the determination of fortune. Do you understand this most unexpected failure? I will allow an ample share to the badness of the roads and the weather, to famine and

disease, to the skill of Dumourier, a heaven-born general! and to the enthusiastic ardour of the new Romans; but still—still there must be some secret and shameful cause at the bottom of this strange retreat. We are now delivered from the impending terrors of siege and invasion. The Geneva *emigrés*, particularly the Neckers, are hastening to their homes, and I shall not be reduced to the hard necessity of seeking a winter asylum at Zurich or Constance; but I am not pleased with our future prospects. It is much to be feared that the present government of Geneva will be soon modelled after the French fashion; the new republic of Savoy is forming on the opposite bank of the lake; the Jacobin missionaries are powerful and zealous; and the malcontents of this country, who begin again to rear their heads, will be surrounded with temptations, and examples, and allies. I know not whether the Pays de Vaud will long adhere to the dominion of Berne, or whether I shall be permitted to end my days in this little paradise, which I have so happily suited to my taste and circumstances.

Last Monday only I received your letter, which had strangely loitered on the road since its date of the 29th of September. There must surely be some disorder in the posts, since the Eliza departed indignant at never having heard from you.

The case of my wine I think peculiarly hard: to lose my Madeira, and to be scolded for losing it. I am much indebted to Mr. Nichols for his genealogical communications, which I am impatient to receive; but I do not understand why so civil a gentleman could not favour me, in six months, with an answer by the post. Since he entrusts me with these valuable papers, you have not, I presume, informed him of my negligence and awkwardness in regard to manuscripts. Your reproach rather surprises me, as I suppose I am much the same as I have been for these last twenty years. Should you hold your resolution of writing only such things as may be published at Charing Cross, our future correspondence would not be very interesting. But I expect and require, at this important crisis, a full and confidential account of your views concerning England, Ireland, and France.

You have a strong and clear eye; and your pen is, perhaps, the most useful quill that ever has been plucked from a goose. Your protection of the French refugees is highly applauded. Rosset and La Motte have escaped from Aarburg, perhaps with connivance, to avoid disagreeable demands from the republic. Adieu. Ever yours.

To the Same.

November 10, 1792.

Received this day, November 9, a most amiable despatch from the too humble secretary[1] of the family of Espee,[2] dated October 24, which I answer the same day. It will be acknowledged that I have fulfilled my engagements with as much accuracy as our uncertain state and the fragility of human nature would allow. I resume my narrative. At the time when we imagined that all was settled, by an equal treaty between two such unequal powers as the Geneva Flea and the Leviathan France, we were thunderstruck with the intelligence that the Ministers of the Republic refused to ratify the conditions; and they were indignant, with some colour of reason, at the hard obligation of withdrawing their troops to the distance of ten leagues, and of consequently leaving the Pays de Gex naked and exposed to the Swiss, who had assembled 15,000 men on the frontier, and with whom they had not made any agreement. The messenger who was sent last Sunday from Geneva is not yet returned, and many persons are afraid of some design and danger in this delay. Montesquieu has acted with politeness, moderation, and apparent sincerity; but he may resign, he may be superseded, his place may be occupied by an *enragé*, by Servan, or Prince Charles of Hesse, who would aspire to imitate the predatory fame of Custine in Germany. In the meanwhile, the general holds a wolf by the ears. An officer who has seen his troops, about 18,000 men (with a tremendous train of artillery), represents them as a black, daring, desperate crew of buccaneers, rather shocking than contemptible; the officers (scarcely a gentleman among them) without servants, or

[1] Miss Holroyd. [2] Meaning Sheffield Place.

horses, or baggage, lying higgledy-piggledy on the ground with the common men, yet maintaining a rough kind of discipline over them. They already begin to accuse and even to suspect their general, and call aloud for blood and plunder. Could they have an opportunity of squeezing some of the rich citizens, Geneva would cut up as fat as most towns in Europe. During this suspension of hostilities they are permitted to visit the city without arms, sometimes three or four hundred at a time; and the magistrates, as well as the Swiss commander, are by no means pleased with this dangerous intercourse, which they dare not prohibit. Such are our fears. Yet it should seem, on the other side, that the French affect a kind of magnanimous justice towards their little neighbour, and that they are not ambitious of an unprofitable contest with the poor and hardy Swiss. The Swiss are not equal to a long and expensive war, and as most of our militia have families and trades, the country already sighs for their return. Whatever can be yielded, without absolute danger or disgrace, will doubtless be granted, and the business will probably end in our owning the sovereignty and trusting to the good faith of the Republic of France. How that word would have sounded four years ago! The measure is humiliating, but after the retreat of the Duke of Brunswick and the failure of the Austrians, the smaller powers may acquiesce without dishonour. Every dog has his day, and these Gallic dogs have their day, at least, of most insolent prosperity. After forcing or tempting the Prussians to evacuate their country, they conquer Savoy, pillage Germany, threaten Spain. The Low Countries are ere now invaded! Rome and Italy tremble; they scour the Mediterranean, and talk of sending a squadron into the South Sea. The whole horizon is so black that I begin to feel some anxiety for England, the last refuge of liberty and law, and the more so, as I perceive from Lord Sheffield's last epistle that his firm nerves are a little shaken. But of this more in my next, for I want to unburthen my conscience. If England, with the experience of our happiness and French calamities, should now be seduced to eat the apple of false freedom, we should indeed deserve to be driven from the

paradise which we enjoy. I turn aside from the horrid and improbable, yet not impossible, supposition that, in three or four years' time myself and my best friends may be reduced to the deplorable state of the French emigrants. They thought it as impossible three or four years ago. Never did a revolution affect to such a degree the private existence of such numbers of the first people of a great country. Your examples of misery I could easily match with similar examples in this country and the neighbourhood; and our sympathy is the deeper as we do not possess like you the means of alleviating in some degree the misfortunes of the fugitives. But I must have, from the very excellent pen of the Maria, the tragedy of the Archbishop of Arles, and the longer the better. Madame de Biron has probably been tempted by some faint and, I fear, fallacious promises of clemency to the women, and which have likewise engaged Madame d'Aguesseau and her two daughters to revisit France. Madame de Bouillon stands her ground, and her situation as a foreign princess is less exposed. As Lord S. has assumed the glorious character of protector of the distressed, his name is pronounced with gratitude and respect. The D. of Richmond is praised on Madame de Biron's account. To the Princess d'Henin and Lally I wish to be remembered. The Neckers cannot venture into Geneva, and Madame de Stael will probably lie in at Rolle. He is printing a defence of the King, &c., against their republican judges, but the name of Necker is unpopular to all parties, and I much fear that the guillotine will be more speedy than the press. It will, however, be an eloquent performance, and, if I find an opportunity, I am to send you one—to you, Lord S.—by his particular desire. He wishes likewise to convey some copies with speed to our principal people —Pitt, Fox, Lord Stormont, &c. But such is the rapid succession of events, that it will appear like the *Pouvoir Exécutif*, his best work, after the whole scene has been totally changed.—Ever yours.

P.S.—The revolution of France, and my triple despatch by the same post to Sheffield Place, are, in my opinion, the two most singular events in the eighteenth century. I found the task so

easy and pleasant, that I had some thoughts of adding a letter to the gentle Louisa. I am this moment informed that our troops on the frontier are beginning to move on their return home; yet we hear nothing of the treaty's being concluded.

EDWARD GIBBON, Esq., *to the* Hon. MISS HOLROYD.

LAUSANNE, *November* 10, 1792.

In despatching the weekly political journal to Lord S., my conscience (for I have some remains of conscience) most powerfully urges me to salute, with some lines of friendship and gratitude, the amiable secretary, who might save herself the trouble of a modest apology. I have not yet forgotten our different behaviour after the much-lamented separation of October 4, 1791, your meritorious punctuality, and my unworthy silence. I have still before me that entertaining narrative, which would have interested me, not only in the progress of the *carissima famiglia*, but in the motions of a Tartar camp or the march of a caravan of Arabs; the mixture of just observation and lively imagery, the strong sense of a man expressed with the easy elegance of a female. I still recollect with pleasure the happy comparison of the Rhine, who had heard so much of liberty on both his banks, that he wandered with mischievous licentiousness over all the adjacent meadows.[1] The inundation, alas! has now spread much wider; and it is sadly to be feared that the Elbe, the Po, and the Danube may imitate the vile example of the Rhine. I shall be content, however, if our own Thames still preserves his fair character of—

"Strong without rage, without o'erflowing full."

These agreeable epistles of Maria produced only some dumb intentions and some barren remorse; nor have I deigned, except by a brief missive from my chancellor, to express how much I loved the author, and how much I was pleased with the com-

[1] Mr. Gibbon alludes to letters written to him by Miss Holroyd when she was returning from Switzerland, along the Rhine, to England.—S.

position. That amiable author I have known and loved from the first dawning of her life and coquetry to the present maturity of her talents; and as long as I remain on this planet I shall pursue, with the same tender and even anxious concern, the future steps of her establishment and life. That establishment must be splendid; that life must be happy. She is endowed with every gift of nature and fortune; but the advantage which she will derive from them depends almost entirely on herself. You must not, you shall not, think yourself unworthy to write to any man: there is none whom your correspondence would not amuse and satisfy. I will not undertake a task which my taste would adopt and my indolence would too soon relinquish, but I am really curious, from the best motives, to have a particular account of your own studies and daily occupation. What books do you read? and how do you employ your time and your pen? Except some professed scholars, I have often observed that women in general read much more than men; but, for want of a plan, a method, a fixed object, their reading is of little benefit to themselves or others. If you will inform me of the species of reading to which you have the most propensity, I shall be happy to contribute my share of advice or assistance. I lament that you have not left me some monument of your pencil. Lady Elizabeth Foster has executed a very pretty drawing, taken from the door of the greenhouse where we dined last summer, and including the poor acacia (now recovered from the cruel shears of the gardener), the end of the terrace, the front of the pavilion, and a distant view of the country, lake, and mountains. I am almost reconciled to D'Apples' house, which is nearly finished. Instead of the monsters which Lord Hercules Sheffield extirpated, the terrace is already shaded with the new acacias and plantains; and although the uncertainty of possession restrains me from building, I myself have planted a *bosquet* at the bottom of the garden, with such admirable skill that it affords shade without intercepting prospect. The society of the aforesaid Eliza, commonly called Bess, of the Duchess of D., &c., has been very interesting; but they are now flown beyond the Alps, and pass the winter at Pisa. The Legards,

who have long since left this place, should be at present in Italy; but I believe Mrs. Grimstone and her daughter returned to England. The Levades are highly flattered by your remembrance. Since you still retain some attachment to this delightful country—and it is indeed delightful—why should you despair of seeing it once more? The happy peer or commoner whose name you may assume is still concealed in the Book of Fate; but whosoever he may be, he will cheerfully obey your commands, of leading you from —— Castle to Lausanne, and from Lausanne to Rome and Naples. Before that event takes place, I may possibly see you in Sussex; and, whether as a visitor or a fugitive, I hope to be welcomed with a friendly embrace. The delay of this year was truly painful, but it was inevitable; and individuals must submit to those storms which have overthrown the thrones of the earth. The tragic story of the Archbishop of Arles I have now somewhat a better right to require at your hands. I wish to have it in all its horrid details;[1] and as you are now so much mingled

[1] The answer to Mr. Gibbon's letter is annexed, as giving the best account I have seen of the barbarous transaction alluded to.—S.

SHEFFIELD PLACE, *November* 1791.

Your three letters received yesterday caused the most sincere pleasure to each individual of this family; to none more than myself. Praise (I fear, beyond my deserts) from one whose opinion I so highly value, and whose esteem I so much wish to preserve, is more pleasing than I can describe. I had not neglected to make the collection of facts which you recommend, and which the great variety of unfortunate persons whom we see, or with whom we correspond, enables me to make.

As to that part of your letter which respects my studies, I can only say the slightest hint on that subject is always received with the greatest gratitude and attended to with the utmost punctuality; but I must decline that topic for the present, to obey your commands, which require from me the horrid account of the *massacre aux Carmes*. Eight respectable ecclesiastics landed, about the beginning of October, from an open boat at Seaford, wet as the waves. The natives of the coast were endeavouring to get from them what they had not, viz., money, when a gentleman of the neighbourhood came to their protection, and finding they had nothing, showed his good sense by despatching them to Milord Sheffield. They had been pillaged, and with great difficulty had escaped from Paris. The reception they met with at this house seemed to make the greatest impression on them: they were in ecstasy on finding M. de Lally living; they gradually became cheerful, and enjoyed their dinner; they were greatly affected as they recollected themselves, and found us attending on them. Having dined, and drank a glass of wine, they began to discover the beauties of the dining-room and of the château. As they

with the French exiles, I am of opinion that were you to keep a journal of all the authentic facts which they relate, it would be an agreeable exercise at present, and a future source of entertainment and instruction.

I should be obliged to you, if you would make or find, some excuse for my not answering a letter from your aunt which was presented to me by Mr. Fowler. I showed him some civilities, but he is now a poor invalid, confined to his room. By her channel and yours I should be glad to have some information of the health, spirits, and situation of Mrs. Gibbon of Bath, whose alarms (if she has any) you may dispel. She is in my debt. Adieu.—Most truly yours.

walked about, they were overheard to express their admiration at the treatment they met, and from Protestants. We then assembled in the library, formed half a circle round the fire, M. de Lally and Milford occupying the hearth *à l'Angloise*, and questioning the priests concerning their escape. Thus we discovered that two of these unfortunate men were in the Carmelite Convent at the time of the massacre of the one hundred and twenty priests, and had most miraculously escaped by climbing trees in the garden, and from thence over the tops of the buildings. One of them, a man of superior appearance, described in the most pathetic manner the death of the Archbishop of Arles (and with such simplicity and feeling as to leave no doubt of the truth of all that he said), to the following purport:—On the 2nd of September, about five o'clock in the evening, at the time they were permitted to walk in the garden, expecting every hour to be released, they expressed their surprise at seeing several large pits which had been digging for two days past. They said, "The day is almost spent; and yet Manuel told a person who interceded for us last Thursday, that on the Sunday following not one should remain in captivity: we are still prisoners." Soon after, they heard shouts, and some musket-shots. An ensign of the National Guard, some commissaries of the sections, and some Marseillois rushed in. The miserable victims, who were dispersed in the garden, assembled under the walls of the church, not daring to go in, lest it should be polluted with blood. One man, who was behind the rest, was shot. "Point de coups de fusils," cried one of the chiefs of the assassins, thinking that kind of death too easy. These well-trained fusiliers went to the rear; *les piques, les haches, les poignards*, came forward. They demanded the Archbishop of Arles; he was immediately surrounded by all the priests. The worthy prelate said to his friends, "Let me pass; if my blood will appease them, what signifies it if I die? Is it not my duty to preserve your lives at the expense of my own?" He asked the eldest of the priests to give him absolution; he knelt to receive it, and when he arose, forced himself from them, advanced slowly, and with his arms crossed upon his breast, and his eyes raised to heaven, said to the assassins, "Je suis celui que vous cherchez." His appearance was so dignified and noble, that, during ten minutes, not one of these wretches had courage to lift his hand against him. They upbraided each other with cowardice, and advanced; one look from this venerable man struck them with awe, and they retired. At

EDWARD GIBBON, Esq., *to the* Right Hon. LADY SHEFFIELD.

LAUSANNE, *November* 10, 1792.

I could never forgive myself were I capable of writing by the same post a political epistle to the father and a friendly letter to the daughter, without sending any token of remembrance to the respectable matron, my dearest my lady, whom I have now loved as a sister for something better or worse than twenty years. No indeed; the historian may be careless, he may be indolent, he may always intend and never execute, but he is neither a monster nor a statue. He has a memory, a conscience, a heart, and that heart is sincerely devoted to Lady S——. He must even acknowledge the fallacy of a sophism which he has sometimes used, and she has always and most truly denied, that where the persons of a family are strictly united, the writing to one is in fact writing to all, and that consequently all his numerous letters to the husband

last one of the miscreants struck off the cap of the Archbishop with a pike; respect once violated, their fury returned, and another from behind cut him through the skull with a sabre. He raised his right hand to his eyes; with another stroke they cut off his hand. The Archbishop said, "Oh! mon Dieu!" and raised the other. A third stroke across the face left him sitting; the fourth extended him lifeless on the ground, and then all pressed forward and buried their pikes and poniards in the body. The priests all agreed that he had been one of the most amiable men in France, and that his only crime was having, since the Revolution, expended his private fortune to support the necessitous clergy of his diocese. The second victim was the General des Bénédictins. Then the National Guards obliged the priests to go into the church, telling them they should appear, one after another, before the *commissaires du section*. They had hardly entered, before the people impatiently called for them; upon which, all kneeling before the altar, the Bishop of Beauvais gave them absolution. They were then obliged to go out, two by two; they passed before a commissaire, who did not question but only counted his victims; they had in their sight the heaps of dead, to which they were going to add. Among the one hundred and twenty priests thus sacrificed were the Bishops of Saintes and Beauvais, both of the Rochefoucauld family. I should not omit to remark that one of the priests observed they were assassinated because they would not swear to a constitution which their murderers had destroyed. We had, to comfort us for this melancholy story, the most grateful expressions of gratitude towards the English nation, from whom they did not do us the justice to expect such a reception.

There can be no doubt that the whole business of the massacres was concerted at a meeting at the Duke of Orleans' house. I shall make you as dismal as myself by this narration. I must change the style. . . . . .

may be considered as equally addressed to his wife. He feels, on the contrary, that separate minds have their distinct ideas and sentiments, and that each character, either in speaking or writing, has its peculiar tone of conversation. He agrees with the maxim of Rousseau, that three friends who wish to disclose a common secret will impart it only *deux à deux;* and he is satisfied that, on the present memorable occasion, each of the persons of the Sheffield family will claim a peculiar share in this triple missive, which will communicate, however, a triple satisfaction. The experience of what may be effected by vigorous resolution encourages the historian to hope that he shall cast the skin of the old serpent, and hereafter show himself as a new creature.

I lament on all our accounts that the last year's expedition to Lausanne did not take place in a golden period of health and spirits. But we must reflect that human felicity is seldom without alloy; and if we cannot indulge the hope of your making a second visit to Lausanne, we must look forward to my residence next summer at Sheffield Place, where I must find you in the full bloom of health, spirits, and beauty. I can perceive, by all public and private intelligence, that your house has been the open hospitable asylum of French fugitives, and it is a sufficient proof of the firmness of your nerves that you have not been overwhelmed or agitated by such a concourse of strangers. Curiosity and compassion may in some degree have supported you. Every day has presented to your view some new scene of that strange tragical romance which occupies all Europe so infinitely beyond any event that has happened in our time, and you have the satisfaction of not being a mere spectator of the distress of so many victims of false liberty. The benevolent fame of Lord S. is widely diffused.

From Angletine's last letter to Maria, you have already some idea of the melancholy state of her poor father. As long as M. de Severy allowed our hopes and fears to fluctuate with the changes of his disorder, I was unwilling to say anything on so painful a subject, and it is with the deepest concern that I now confess our absolute despair of his recovery. All his particular complaints are now lost in a general dissolution of his whole

frame; every principle of life is exhausted; and as often as I am admitted to his bedside, though he still looks and smiles with the patience of an angel, I have the heartfelt grief of seeing him each day drawing nearer to the term of his existence. A few weeks, possibly a few days, will deprive me of a most excellent friend, and break for ever the most perfect system of domestic happiness in which I had so large and intimate a share. Wilhelm, who has obtained leave of absence from his military duty, and his sister behave and feel like tender and dutiful children; but they have a long, gay prospect of life, and new connections, new families, will make them forget, in due time, the common lot of mortality. But it is Madame de Severy whom I truly pity; I dread the effects of the first shock, and I dread still more the deep perpetual consuming affliction for a loss which can never be retrieved. You will not wonder that such reflections sadden my own mind, nor can I forget how much my situation is altered since I retired, nine years ago, to the banks of the Leman Lake. The death of poor Deyverdun first deprived me of a domestic companion, who can never be supplied; and your visit has only served to remind me that man, however amused and occupied in his closet, was not made to live alone. Severy will soon be no more; his widow for a long time, perhaps for ever, will be lost to herself and her friends, the son will travel, and I shall be left a stranger in the insipid circle of mere common acquaintance. The Revolution of France, which first embittered and divided the society of Lausanne, has opposed a barrier to my Sussex visit, and may finally expel me from the paradise which I inhabit. Even that paradise, the expensive and delightful establishment of my house, library, and garden, almost becomes an encumbrance, by rendering it more difficult for me to relinquish my hold, or to form a new system of life in my native country, for which my income, though improved and improving, would be probably insufficient. But every complaint should be silenced by the contemplation of the French, compared with whose cruel fate all misery is relative happiness. I perfectly concur in your partiality for Lally; though Nature might forget some meaner

ingredients of prudence, economy, &c., she never formed a purer heart or a brighter imagination. If he be with you, I beg my kindest salutations to him. I am every day more closely united with the Neckers. Should France break and this country be overrun, they would be reduced, in very humble circumstances, to seek a refuge; and where but in England? Adieu, dear Madam; there is, indeed, much pleasure in discharging one's heart to a real friend.—Ever yours.

EDWARD GIBBON, Esq., *to the* Right Hon. LORD SHEFFIELD.

[Send me a list of these letters, with their respective dates.]

LAUSANNE, *November* 25, 1792.

After the triple labour of my last despatch, your experience of the creature might tempt you to suspect that it would again relapse into a long slumber. But, partly from the spirit of contradiction (though I am not a lady), and partly from the ease and pleasure which I now find in the task, you see me again alive, awake, and almost faithful to my hebdomadal promise. The last week has not, however, afforded any events deserving the notice of an historian. Our affairs are still floating on the waves of the Convention, and the ratification of a corrected treaty, which had been fixed for the 20th, is not yet arrived; but the report of the diplomatic committee has been favourable, and it is generally understood that the leaders of the French Republic do not wish to quarrel with the Swiss. We are gradually withdrawing and disbanding our militia. Geneva will be left to sink or swim, according to the humour of the people; and our last hope appears to be, that by submission and good behaviour we shall avert for some time the impending storm. A few days ago an odd accident happened in the French army—the desertion of the general. As the Neckers were sitting, about eight o'clock in the evening, in their drawing-room at Rolle,[1] the door flew open, and they were astounded by their servant's announcing *Monsieur*

[1] A considerable town between Lausanne and Geneva.

le General de Montesquieu! On the receipt of some secret intelligence of a *décret d'accusation* and an order to arrest him, he had only time to get on horseback, to gallop through Geneva, to take boat for Copet, and to escape from his pursuers, who were ordered to seize him alive or dead. He left the Neckers after supper, passed through Lausanne in the night, and proceeded to Berne and Basle, whence he intended to wind his way through Germany amidst enemies of every description, and to seek a refuge in England, America, or the moon. He told Necker that the sole remnant of his fortune consisted in a wretched sum of twenty thousand livres; but the public report, or suspicion, bespeaks him in much better circumstances. Besides the reproach of acting with too much tameness and delay, he is accused of making very foul and exorbitant contracts; and it is certain that new Sparta is infected with this vice beyond the example of the most corrupt monarchy. Kellerman is arrived to take the command; and it is apprehended that on the 1st of December, after the departure of the Swiss, the French may request the permission of using Geneva, a friendly city, for their winter quarters. In that case, the democratical revolution, which we all foresee, will be very speedily effected.

I would ask you whether you apprehend there was any treason in the Duke of Brunswick's retreat, and whether you have totally withdrawn your confidence and esteem from that once-famed general? Will it be possible for England to preserve her neutrality with any honour or safety? We are bound, as I understand, by treaty to guarantee the dominions of the King of Sardinia and the Austrian provinces of the Netherlands. These countries are now invaded and overrun by the French. Can we refuse to fulfil our engagements without exposing ourselves to all Europe as a perfidious or pusillanimous nation? Yet, on the other hand, can we assist those allies without plunging headlong into an abyss whose bottom no man can discover? But my chief anxiety is for our domestic tranquillity, for I must find a retreat in England should I be driven from Lausanne. The idea of firm and honourable union of parties pleases me

much, but you must frankly unfold what are the great difficulties that may impede so salutary a measure; you write to a man discreet in speech, and now careful of papers. Yet what can such a coalition avail? Where is the champion of the constitution? Alas, Lord Guildford! I am much pleased with the Manchester Ass. The asses or wolves who sacrificed him have cast off the mask too soon, and such a nonsensical act must open the eyes of many simple patriots who might have been led astray by the specious name of reform. It should be made as notorious as possible. Next winter may be the crisis of our fate, and if you begin to improve the constitution, you may be driven step by step from the disfranchisement of Old Sarum to the King in Newgate, the Lords voted useless, the Bishops abolished, and a House of Commons without articles (*sans culottes*). Necker has ordered you a copy of his royal defence, which has met with, and deserved, universal success. The pathetic and argumentative parts are, in my opinion, equally good, and his mild eloquence may persuade without irritating. I have applied to this gentler tone some verses of Ovid (Metamorph. l. iii. 302, &c.[1]) which you may read. Madame de Stael has produced a second son. She talks wildly enough of visiting England this winter. She is a pleasant little woman. Poor Severy's condition is hopeless. Should he drag through the winter, Madame de S. would scarcely survive him. She kills herself with grief and fatigue. What a difference in Lausanne! I hope triple answers are on the road. I must write soon; the times will not allow me to read or think.—Ever yours.

To the Same.

LAUSANNE, *December* 14, 1792.

Our little storm has now completely subsided, and we are again spectators, though anxious spectators, of the general tempest that

[1] Quà tamen usque potest, vires sibi demere tentat.
Nec, quo centimanum dejecerat igne Typhœa,
Nunc armatur eo: nimiùm feritatis in illo est.
Est aliud levius fulmen; cui dextra Cyclopum
Sævitiæ, flammæque minus, minus addidit iræ:
Tela secunda vocant Superi.

invades or threatens almost every country of Europe. Our troops are every day disbanding and returning home, and the greatest part of the French have evacuated the neighbourhood of Geneva. Monsieur Barthélemy, whom you have seen secretary in London, is most courteously entertained, as ambassador, by the Helvetic body. He is now at Berne, where a diet will speedily be convened; the language on both sides is now pacific, and even friendly, and some hopes are given of a provision for the officers of the Swiss guards who have survived the massacres of Paris.

January 1, 1793.

With the return of peace I have relapsed into my former indolence; but now awakening, after a fortnight's slumber, I have little or nothing to add with regard to the internal state of this country; only the revolution of Geneva has already taken place, as I announced, but sooner than I expected. The Swiss troops had no sooner evacuated the place than the *Égaliseurs*, as they are called, assembled in arms; and as no resistance was made, no blood was shed on the occasion. They seized the gates, disarmed the garrison, imprisoned the magistrates, imparted the rights of citizens to all the rabble of the town and country, and proclaimed a National Convention, which has not yet met. They are all for a pure and absolute democracy; but some wish to remain a small independent State, whilst others aspire to become a part of the Republic of France; and as the latter, though less numerous, are more violent and absurd than their adversaries, it is highly probable that they will succeed. The citizens of the best families and fortunes have retired from Geneva into the Pays de Vaud, but the French methods of recalling or proscribing emigrants will soon be adopted. You must have observed that Savoy is now become *le département du Mont Blanc.* I cannot satisfy myself whether the mass of the people is pleased or displeased with the change; but my noble scenery is clouded by the democratical aspect of twelve leagues of the opposite coast, which every morning obtrude themselves on my view. I here conclude the first part of the history of our

Alpine troubles, and now consider myself as disengaged from all promises of periodical writing. Upon the whole, I kept it beyond our expectation; nor do I think that you have been sufficiently astonished by the wonderful effort of the triple despatch.

You must now succeed to my task, and I shall expect, during the winter, a regular political journal of the events of your greater world. You are on the theatre, and may often be behind the scenes. You can always see, and may sometimes foresee. My own choice has indeed transported me into a foreign land; but I am truly attached, from interest and inclination, to my native country; and even as a citizen of the world, I wish the stability of England, the sole great refuge of mankind, against the opposite mischiefs of despotism and democracy. I was indeed alarmed, and the more so as I saw that you were not without apprehension; but I now glory in the triumph of reason and genuine patriotism, which seems to pervade the country; nor do I dislike some mixture of popular enthusiasm, which may be requisite to encounter our mad or wicked enemies with equal arms. The behaviour of Fox does not surprise me. You may remember what I told you last year at Lausanne when you attempted his defence, that . . . . . .

. . . . . .

You have now crushed the daring subverters of the constitution; but I now fear the moderate well-meaners, reformers. Do not, I beseech you, tamper with parliamentary representation. The present House of Commons forms, in practice, a body of gentlemen who must always sympathise with the interests and opinions of the people; and the slightest innovation launches you, without rudder or compass, on a dark and dangerous ocean of theoretical experiment. On this subject I am indeed serious.

Upon the whole, I like the beginning of ninety-three better than the end of ninety-two. The illusion seems to break away throughout Europe. I think England and Switzerland are safe. Brabant adheres to his old constitution. The Germans are disgusted with the rapine and insolence of their deliverers. The

Pope is resolved to head his armies, and the Lazzaroni of Naples have presented St. Januarius with a gold fusee, to fire on the Brigands François. So much for politics, which till now never had such possession of my mind. Next post I will write about myself and my designs. Alas, your poor eyes! Make the Maria write; I will speedily answer her. My lady is still dumb. The German posts are now slow and irregular. You had better write by the way of France, under cover. Direct to *Le Citoien Rebours à Pontalier*, France. Adieu.—Ever yours.

To the Same.

LAUSANNE, *January* 6, 1793.

There was formerly a time when our correspondence was a painful discussion of my private affairs; a vexatious repetition of losses, of disappointments, of sales, &c. These affairs are decently arranged; but public cares have now succeeded to private anxiety, and our whole attention is lately turned from Lenborough and Beriton to the political state of France and of Europe. From these politics, however, one letter shall be free while I talk of myself and of my own plans; a subject most interesting to a friend, and only to a friend.

I know not whether I am sorry or glad that my expedition has been postponed to the present year. It is true that I now wish myself in England, and almost repent that I did not grasp the opportunity when the obstacles were comparatively smaller than they are now likely to prove. Yet, had I reached you last summer, before the month of August, a considerable portion of my time would be now elapsed, and I should already begin to think of my departure. If the gout should spare me this winter (and as yet I have not felt any symptom), and if the spring should make a soft and early appearance, it is my intention to be with you in Downing Street before the end of April, and thus to enjoy six weeks or two months of the most agreeable season of London and the neighbourhood, after the hurry of Parliament is subsided, and before the great rural dispersion. As the banks of the Rhine

and the Belgic provinces are completely overspread with anarchy and war, I have made up my mind to pass through the territories of the French Republic. From the best and most recent information, I am satisfied that there is little or no real danger in the journey; and I must arm myself with patience to support the vexatious insolence of democratical tyranny. I have even a sort of curiosity to spend some days at Paris, to assist at the debates of the Pandemonium, to seek an introduction to the principal devils, and to contemplate a new form of public and private life, which never existed before, and which I devoutly hope will not long continue to exist. Should the obstacles of health or weather confine me at Lausanne till the month of May, I shall scarcely be able to resist the temptation of passing some part at least of the summer in my own little paradise. But all these schemes must ultimately depend on the great question of peace and war, which will indeed be speedily determined. Should France become impervious to an English traveller, what must I do? I shall not easily resolve to explore my way through the unknown language and abominable roads of the interior parts of Germany, to embark in Holland, or perhaps at Hamburg, and to be finally intercepted by a French privateer. My stay in England appears not less doubtful than the means of transporting myself. Should I arrive in the spring, it is possible, and barely possible, that I should return here in the autumn. It is much more probable that I shall pass the winter, and there may be even a chance of my giving my own country a longer trial. In my letter to my lady I fairly exposed the decline of Lausanne; but such an establishment as mine must not be lightly abandoned; nor can I discover what adequate mode of life my private circumstances, easy as they now are, could afford me in England. London and Bath have doubtless their respective merits, and I could wish to reside within a day's journey of Sheffield Place. But a state of perfect happiness is not to be found here below; and in the possession of my library, house, and garden, with the relics of our society, and a frequent intercourse with the Neckers, I may still be tolerably content. Among the disastrous changes of Lausanne,

I must principally reckon the approaching dissolution of poor Severy and his family. He is still alive, but in such a hopeless and painful decay, that we no longer conceal our wishes for his speedy release. I never loved nor esteemed him so much as in this last mortal disease, which he supports with a degree of energy, patience, and even cheerfulness beyond all belief. His wife, whose whole time and soul are devoted to him, is almost sinking under her long anxiety. The children are most amiably assiduous to both their parents, and, at all events, his filial duties and worldly cares must detain the son some time at home.

And now approach, and let me drop into your most private ear a literary secret. Of the Memoirs little has been done, and with that little I am not satisfied. They must be postponed till a mature season; and I much doubt whether the book and the author can ever see the light at the same time. But I have long revolved in my mind another scheme of biographical writing: the Lives, or rather the Characters, of the most eminent persons in Arts and Arms, in Church and State, who have flourished in Britain from the reign of Henry VIII. to the present age. This work, extensive as it may be, would be an amusement rather than a toil; the materials are accessible in our own language, and, for the most part, ready to my hands; but the subject, which would afford a rich display of human nature and domestic history, would powerfully address itself to the feelings of every Englishman. The taste or fashion of the times seems to delight in picturesque decorations, and this series of British portraits might aptly be accompanied by the respective heads, taken from originals and engraved by the best masters. Alderman Boydell and his son-in-law, Mr. George Nicol, bookseller in Pall Mall, are the great undertakers in this line. On my arrival in England I shall be free to consider whether it may suit me to proceed in a mere literary work without any other decorations than those which it may derive from the pen of the author. It is a serious truth that I am no longer ambitious of fame or money, that my habits of industry are much impaired, and that I have reduced my studies to be the loose amusement of my morning hours,

the repetition of which will insensibly lead me to the last term of existence. And for this very reason I shall not be sorry to bind myself by a liberal engagement, from which I may not with honour recede.

Before I conclude we must say a word or two of parliamentary and pecuniary concerns. 1. We all admire the generous spirit with which you damned the assassins . . . I hope that . . . The opinion of Parliament in favour of Louis was declared in a manner worthy of the representatives of a great and a wise nation. It will certainly have a powerful effect; and if the poor King be not already murdered, I am satisfied that his life is in safety. But is such a life worth his care? Our debates will now become every day more interesting; and as I expect from you only opinions and anecdotes, I most earnestly conjure you to send me *Woodfall's Register* as often (and that must be very often) as the occasion deserves it. I now spare no expense for news.

I want some account of Mrs. G.'s health. Will my lady never write? How can people be so indolent! I suppose this will find you at Sheffield Place during the recess, and that the heavy baggage will not move till after the birthday. Shall I be with you by the 1st of May? The gods only know. I almost wish that I had accompanied Madame de Stael.—Ever yours.

To the Same.

Begun *Feb.* 9—ended *Feb.* 18, 1793.

The struggle is at length over, and poor De Severy is no more! He expired about ten days ago, after every vital principle had been exhausted by a complication of disorders which had lasted above five months, and a mortification in one of his legs, that gradually rose to the more noble parts, was the immediate cause of his death. His patience and even cheerfulness supported him to the fatal moment; and he enjoyed every comfort that could alleviate his situation—the skill of his physicians, the assiduous tenderness of his family, and the kind sympathy, not only of his particular friends, but even of common acquaintance, and gene-

rally of the whole town. The stroke has been severely felt, yet I have the satisfaction to perceive that Madame de Severy's health is not affected, and we may hope that in time she will recover a tolerable share of composure and happiness. Her firmness has checked the violent sallies of grief; her gentleness has preserved her from the worst of symptoms, a dry, silent despair. She loves to talk of her irreparable loss; she descants with pleasure on his virtues. Her words are interrupted with tears, but those tears are her best relief, and her tender feelings will insensibly subside into an affectionate remembrance. Wilhelm is much more deeply wounded than I could imagine, or than he expected himself; nor have I ever seen the affliction of a son more lively or sincere. Severy was indeed a very valuable man. Without any shining qualifications, he was endowed in a high degree with good sense, honour, and benevolence; and few men have filled with more propriety their circle in private life. For myself, I have had the misfortune of knowing him too late, and of losing him too soon. But enough of this melancholy subject.

The affairs of this theatre, which must always be minute, are now grown so tame and tranquil that they no longer deserve the historian's pen. The new constitution of Geneva is slowly forming, without much noise or any bloodshed; and the patriots, who have stayed in hopes of guiding and restraining the multitude, flatter themselves that they shall be able at least to prevent their mad countrymen from giving themselves to the French, the only mischief that would be absolutely irretrievable. The revolution of Geneva is of less consequence to us, however, than that of Savoy; but our fate will depend on the general event, rather than on these particular causes. In the meanwhile we hope to be quiet spectators of the struggle of this year; and we seem to have assurances that both the Emperor and the French will compound for the neutrality of the Swiss. The Helvetic body does not acknowledge the Republic of France; but Barthélemy, their ambassador, resides at Baden, and steals, like Chauvelin, into a kind of extra-official negotiation. All spirit of opposition is quelled in the canton of Berne, and the perpetual

banishment of the —— family has scarcely excited a murmur. It will probably be followed by that of —— ——. The crime alleged in their sentence is the having assisted at the federation-dinner at Rolle two years ago; and as they are absent, I could almost wish that they had been summoned to appear, and heard in their own defence. To the general supineness of the inhabitants of Lausanne I must ascribe that the death of Louis the Sixteenth has been received with less horror and indignation than I could have wished. I was much tempted to go into mourning, and probably should had the Duchess been still here; but, as the only Englishman of any mark, I was afraid of being singular; more especially as our French emigrants, either from prudence or poverty, do not wear black, nor do even the Neckers. Have you read his discourse for the King? It might indeed supersede the necessity of mourning. I should judge from your last letter, and from the Diary, that the French declaration of war must have rather surprised you. I wish, although I know not how it could have been avoided, that we might still have continued to enjoy our safe and prosperous neutrality. You will not doubt my best wishes for the destruction of the miscreants; but I love England still more than I hate France. All reasonable chances are in favour of a confederacy, such as was never opposed to the ambition of Louis the Fourteenth; but, after the experience of last year, I distrust reason, and confess myself fearful for the event. The French are strong in numbers, activity, enthusiasm; they are rich in rapine, and although their strength may be only that of a frenzy fever, they may do infinite mischief to their neighbours before they can be reduced to a strait-waistcoat. I dread the effects that may be produced on the minds of the people by the increase of debt and taxes, probable losses, and possible mismanagement. Our trade must suffer; and though projects of invasion have been always abortive, I cannot forget that the fleets and armies of Europe have failed before the towns in America, which have been taken and plundered by a handful of buccaneers. I know nothing of Pitt as a War Minister, but it affords me much satisfaction that the

intrepid wisdom of the new Chancellor[1] is introduced into the Cabinet. I wish, not merely on your own account, that you were placed in an active, useful station in Government. I should not dislike you Secretary at War.

I have little more to say of myself, or of my journey to England. You know my intentions, and the great events of Europe must determine whether they can be carried into execution this summer. If —— has warmly adopted your idea, I shall speedily hear from him; but, in truth, I know not what will be my answer. I see difficulties which at first did not occur; I doubt my own perseverance, and my fancy begins to wander into new paths. The amusement of reading and thinking may perhaps satisfy a man who has paid his debt to the public; and there is more pleasure in building castles in the air than on the ground. I shall contrive some small assistance for your correspondent, though I cannot learn anything that distinguishes him from many of his countrymen. We have had our full share of poor emigrants, but if you wish that anything extraordinary should be done for this man, you must send me a measure. Adieu. I embrace my lady and Maria, as also Louisa, if with you. Perhaps I may soon write, without expecting an answer.—Ever yours.

To the Same.

LAUSANNE, *April* 27, 1793.

My dearest Friend, for such you most truly are, nor does there exist a person who obtains, or shall ever obtain, a superior place in my esteem and affection.

After too long a silence I was sitting down to write, when, only yesterday morning (such is now the irregular slowness of the English post), I was suddenly struck, indeed struck to the heart, by the fatal intelligence[2] from Sir Henry Clinton and M. de Lally. Alas! what is life, and what are our hopes and projects! When I embraced her at your departure from Lausanne, could I imagine that it was for the last time? When I postponed to another summer

[1] Lord Loughborough. [2] The death of Lady Sheffield.

my journey to England, could I apprehend that I never, never should see her again? I always hoped that she would spin her feeble thread to a long duration, and that her delicate frame would survive (as is often the case) many constitutions of a stouter appearance. In four days! in your absence, in that of her children! But she is now at rest; and if there be a future life, her mild virtues have surely entitled her to the reward of pure and perfect felicity. It is for you that I feel, and I can judge of your sentiments by comparing them with my own. I have lost, it is true, an amiable and affectionate friend, whom I had known and loved above three-and-twenty years, and whom I often styled by the endearing name of sister. But you are deprived of the companion of your life, the wife of your choice, and the mother of your children. Poor children! The liveliness of Maria and the softness of Louisa render them almost equally the objects of my tenderest compassion. I do not wish to aggravate your grief; but, in the sincerity of friendship, I cannot hold a different language. I know the impotence of reason, and I much fear that the strength of your character will serve to make a sharper and more lasting impression.

The only consolation in these melancholy trials to which human life is exposed, the only one at least in which I have any confidence, is the presence of a real friend; and of that, as far as it depends on myself, you shall not be destitute. I regret the few days that must be lost in some necessary preparations; but I trust that to-morrow se'nnight (May the 5th) I shall be able to set forward on my journey to England, and when this letter reaches you I shall be considerably advanced on my way. As it is yet prudent to keep at a respectful distance from the banks of the French Rhine, I shall incline a little to the right, and proceed by Schaffhausen and Stuttgart to Frankfort and Cologne. The Austrian Netherlands are now open and safe, and I am sure of being able at least to pass from Ostend to Dover; whence, without passing through London, I shall pursue the direct road to Sheffield Place. Unless I should meet with some unforeseen accidents and delays, I hope before the end of the month to share your solitude and

sympathise with your grief. All the difficulties of the journey, which my indolence had probably magnified, have now disappeared before a stronger passion, and you will not be sorry to hear that, as far as Frankfort to Cologne, I shall enjoy the advantage of the society, the conversation, the German language, and the active assistance of Severy. His attachment to me is the sole motive which prompts him to undertake this troublesome journey, and as soon as he has seen me over the roughest ground, he will immediately return to Lausanne. The poor young man loved Lady S. as a mother, and the whole family is deeply affected by an event which reminds them too painfully of their own misfortune. Adieu. I could write volumes, and shall therefore break off abruptly. I shall write on the road, and hope to find a few lines *à poste restante* at Frankfort and Brussels. Adieu. —Ever yours.

To the Same.

LAUSANNE, *May* 1793.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I must write a few lines before my departure, though indeed I scarcely know what to say. Nearly a fortnight has now elapsed since the first melancholy tidings, without my having received the slightest subsequent accounts of your health and situation. Your own silence announces too forcibly how much you are involved in your feelings, and I can but too easily conceive that a letter to me would be more painful than to an indifferent person. But that amiable man, Count Lally, might surely have written a second time; but your sister, who is probably with you; but Maria—alas! poor Maria! I am left in a state of darkness to the workings of my own fancy, which imagines everything that is sad and shocking. What can I think of for your relief and comfort? I will not expatiate on those commonplace topics which have never dried a single tear; but let me advise, let me urge you to force yourself into business, as I would try to force myself into study. The mind must not be idle; if it be not exercised on external objects, it will prey on its own vitals. A thousand little arrangements which must precede a long journey have postponed my departure three or four days beyond the

term which I had first appointed; but all is now in order, and I set off to-morrow, the 9th instant, with my *valet de chambre*, a courier on horseback, and Severy, with his servant, as far as Frankfort. I calculate my arrival at Sheffield Place (how I dread and desire to see that mansion!) for the first week in June, soon after this letter; but I will try to send you some later intelligence. I never found myself stronger or in better health. The German road is now cleared, both of enemies and allies, and though I must expect fatigue, I have not any apprehensions of danger. It is scarcely possible that you should meet me at Frankfort, but I shall be much disappointed at not finding a line at Brussels or Ostend. Adieu. If there be any invisible guardians, may they watch over you and yours! Adieu.

To the Same.

FRANKFORT, *May* 19, 1793.

And here I am in good health and spirits, after one of the easiest, safest, and pleasantest journeys which I ever performed in my whole life; not the appearance of an enemy, and hardly the appearance of a war. Yet I hear, as I am writing, the cannon of the siege of Mayence, at the distance of twenty miles; and long, very long, will it be heard. It is confessed on all sides that the French fight with a courage worthy of a better cause. The town of Mayence is strong, their artillery admirable; they are already reduced to horseflesh, but they have still the resource of eating the inhabitants, and at last of eating one another; and if that repast could be extended to Paris and the whole country, it might essentially contribute to the relief of mankind. Our operations are carried on with more than German slowness, and when the besieged are quiet, the besiegers are perfectly satisfied with their progress. A spirit of division undoubtedly prevails, and the character of the Prussians for courage and discipline is sunk lower than you can possibly imagine. Their glory has expired with Frederick. I am sorry to have missed Lord Elgin, who is beyond the Rhine with the King of Prussia. As I am impatient, I propose setting forward to-morrow afternoon, and shall reach

Ostend in less than eight days. The passage must depend on winds and packets, and I hope to find at Brussels or Dover a letter which will direct me to Sheffield Place or Downing Street. Severy goes back from hence. Adieu. I embrace the dear girls. —Ever yours.

From the Same.

BRUSSELS, *May* 27, 1793.

This day, between two and three o'clock in the afternoon, I am arrived at this place in excellent preservation. My expedition, which is now drawing to a close, has been a journey of perseverance rather than speed, of some labour since Frankfort, but without the smallest degree of difficulty or danger. As I have every morning been seated in the chaise soon after sunrise, I propose indulging to-morrow till eleven o'clock, and going that day no farther than Ghent. On Wednesday the 29th instant I shall reach Ostend in good time, just eight days, according to my former reckoning, from Frankfort. Beyond that I can say nothing positive; but should the winds be propitious it is possible that I may appear next Saturday, June 1st, in Downing Street. After that earliest date you will expect me day by day till I arrive. Adieu. I embrace the dear girls and salute Mrs. Ho'royd. I rejoice that you have anticipated my advice by plunging into business; but I should now be sorry if that business, however important, detained us long in town. I do not wish to make a public exhibition, and only sigh to enjoy you and the precious remnant in the solitude of Sheffield Place.—Ever yours.

If I am successful I may outstrip or accompany this letter. Yours and Maria's waited for me here, and overpaid the journey.

The preceding letters intimate that, in return for my visit to Lausanne in 1791, Mr. Gibbon engaged to pass a year with me in England; that the war having rendered travelling exceedingly inconvenient, especially to a person who, from his bodily infirmities, required every accommodation, prevented his undertaking so formidable a journey at the time he proposed.

The call of friendship, however, was sufficient to make him overlook every personal consideration when he thought his presence might prove a consolation. I must ever regard it as the most endearing proof of his sensibility, and of his possessing the true spirit of friendship, that, after having relinquished the thought of his intended visit, he hastened to England, in spite of increasing impediments, to soothe me by the most generous sympathy, and to alleviate my domestic affliction; neither his great corpulency, nor his extraordinary bodily infirmities, nor any other consideration, could prevent him a moment from resolving on an undertaking that might have deterred the most active young man. He, almost immediately, with alertness by no means natural to him, undertook a great circuitous journey along the frontiers of an enemy worse than savage, within the sound of their cannon, within the range of the light troops of the different armies, and through roads ruined by the enormous machinery of war.

The readiness with which he engaged in this kind office of friendship, at a time when a selfish spirit might have pleaded a thousand reasons for declining so hazardous a journey, conspired with the peculiar charms of his society to render his arrival a cordial to my mind. I had the satisfaction of finding that his own delicate and precarious health had not suffered in the service of his friend, a service in which he disregarded his own personal infirmities. He arrived in the beginning of June at my house in Downing Street, safe and in good health; and after we had passed about a month together in London, we settled at Sheffield Place for the summer, where his wit, learning, and cheerful politeness delighted a great variety of characters.

Although he was inclined to represent his health as better than it really was, his habitual dislike to motion appeared to increase; his inaptness to exercise confined him to the library and dining-room, and there he joined my friend, Mr. Frederick North, in pleasant arguments against exercise in general. He ridiculed the unsettled and restless disposition that summer, the most uncomfortable, as he said, of all seasons, generally gives to those who have the free use of their limbs. Such arguments were little re-

quired to keep society within-doors, when his company was only there to be enjoyed; for neither the fineness of the season nor the most promising parties of pleasure could tempt the company of either sex to desert him.

Those who have enjoyed the society of Mr. Gibbon will agree with me that his conversation was still more captivating than his writings. Perhaps no man ever divided time more fairly between literary labour and social enjoyment; and hence, probably, he derived his peculiar excellence of making his very extensive knowledge contribute in the highest degree to the use or pleasure of those with whom he conversed. He united, in the happiest manner imaginable, two characters which are not often found in the same person, the profound scholar and the fascinating companion.

It would be superfluous to attempt a very minute delineation of a character which is so distinctly marked in the Memoirs and letters. He has described himself without reserve and with perfect sincerity. The letters, and especially the extracts from the Journal, which could not have been written with any purpose of being seen, will make the reader perfectly acquainted with the man.

Excepting a visit to Lord Egremont and Mr. Hayley, whom he very particularly esteemed, Mr. Gibbon was not absent from Sheffield Place till the beginning of October, when we were reluctantly obliged to part with him, that he might perform his engagement to Mrs. Gibbon at Bath, the widow of his father, who had early deserved, and invariably retained, his affection. From Bath he proceeded to Lord Spenser's, at Althorpe, a family which he always met with uncommon satisfaction. He continued in good health during the whole summer, and in excellent spirits (I never knew him enjoy better); and when he went from Sheffield Place, little did I imagine it would be the last time I should have the inexpressible pleasure of seeing him there in full possession of health.

The few following short letters, though not important in themselves, will fill up this part of the narrative better, and more agreeably, than anything I can substitute in their place—

EDWARD GIBBON, Esq., *to the* Right Hon. LORD SHEFFIELD.

October 2, 1793.

The Cork Street hotel has answered its recommendation; it is clean, convenient, and quiet. My first evening was passed at home in a very agreeable *tête-à-tête* with my friend Elmsley. Yesterday I dined at Craufurd's with an excellent set, in which were Pelham and Lord Egremont. I dine to-day with my Portuguese friend, Madame de Sylva, at Grenier's; most probably with Lady Webster, whom I met last night at Devonshire House—a constant, though late, resort of society. The Duchess is as good and Lady Elizabeth as seducing as ever. No news whatsoever. You will see in the papers Lord Harvey's memorial. I love vigour, but it is surely a strong measure to tell a gentleman you have resolved to pass the winter in his house. London is not disagreeable, yet I shall probably leave it on Saturday. If anything should occur I will write. Adieu.—Ever yours.

To the Same.

Sunday afternoon I left London and lay at Reading, and Monday, in very good time, I reached this place, after a very pleasant airing, and am always so much delighted and improved with this union of ease and motion, that, were not the expense enormous, I would travel every year some hundred miles, more especially in England. I passed the day with Mrs. G. yesterday. In mind and conversation she is just the same as twenty years ago. She has spirits, appetite, legs, and eyes, and talks of living till ninety.[1] I can say from my heart, Amen. We dine at two, and remain together till nine; but, although we have much to say, I am not sorry that she talks of introducing a third or fourth actor. Lord Spenser expects me about the 20th, but if I can do it without offence I shall steal away two or three days sooner, and you shall have advice of my motions. The troubles of Bristol have been serious and bloody. I know not who was in fault, but

[1] She was then in her eightieth year.—S.

I do not like appeasing the mob by the extinction of the toll and the removal of the Hereford militia, who had done their duty. Adieu. The girls must dance at Tunbridge. What would dear little aunt say if I was to answer her letter?—Ever yours, &c.

YORK HOUSE, BATH, *October* 9, 1793.

I still follow the old style, though the Convention has abolished the Christian era, with months, weeks, days, &c.

To the Same.

YORK HOUSE, BATH, *October* 13, 1793.

I am as ignorant of Bath in general as if I were still at Sheffield. My impatience to get away makes me think it better to devote my whole time to Mrs. G.; and dear little aunt, whom I tenderly salute, will excuse me to her two friends, Mrs. Hartley and Preston, if I make little or no use of her kind introduction. A *tête-à-tête* of eight or nine hours every day is rather difficult to support, yet I do assure you that our conversation flows with more ease and spirit when we are alone than when any auxiliaries are summoned to our aid. She is indeed a wonderful woman, and I think all her faculties of the mind stronger and more active than I have ever known them. I have settled that ten full days may be sufficient for all the purposes of our interview. I should therefore depart next Friday, the 18th instant, and am indeed expected at Althorpe on the 20th. But I may possibly reckon without my host, as I have not yet apprised Mrs. G. of the term of my visit, and will certainly not quarrel with her for a short delay. Adieu. I must have some political speculations. The campaign, at least on our side, seems to be at an end.—Ever yours.

To the Same.

ALTHORPE LIBRARY, *Tuesday, four o'clock.*

We have so completely exhausted this morning among the first editions of Cicero that I can mention only my departure hence

to-morrow, the 6th instant. I shall lie quietly at Woburn, and reach London in good time Thursday. By the following post I will write somewhat more largely. My stay in London will depend partly on my amusement and your being fixed at Sheffield Place, unless you think I can be comfortably arranged for a week or two with you at Brighton. The military remarks seem good; but now to what purpose? Adieu. I embrace and much rejoice in Louisa's improvement. Lord Ossory was from home at Farning Woods.

To the Same.

LONDON, *Friday, Nov.* 8, *four o'clock.*

Walpole has just delivered yours, and I hasten the direction, that you may not be at a loss. I will write to-morrow, but I am now fatigued, and rather unwell. Adieu. I have not seen a soul except Elmsley.

To the Same.

ST. JAMES'S STREET, *Nov.* 9, 1793.

As I dropped yesterday the word unwell, I flatter myself that the family would have been a little alarmed by my silence to-day. I am still awkward, though without any suspicions of gout, and have some idea of having recourse to medical advice. Yet I creep out to-day in a chair to dine with Lord Lucan. But as it will be literally my first going downstairs, and as scarcely any one is apprised of my arrival, I know nothing, I have heard nothing, I have nothing to say. My present lodging, a house of Elmsley's, is cheerful, convenient, somewhat dear, but not so much as a hotel—a species of habitation for which I have not conceived any great affection. Had you been stationary at Sheffield, you would have seen me before the 20th, for I am tired of rambling, and pant for my home—that is to say, for your house. But whether I shall have courage to brave —— and a bleak down, time only can discover. Adieu. I wish you back to Sheffield Place. The health of dear Louisa is doubtless the first

object, but I did not expect Brighton after Tunbridge. Whenever dear little aunt is separate from you, I shall certainly write to her; but at present how is it possible?—Ever yours.

To the Same, at Brighthelmstone.

ST. JAMES'S STREET, *Nov.* 11, 1793.

I must at length withdraw the veil before my state of health, though the naked truth may alarm you more than a fit of the gout. Have you never observed through my inexpressibles a large prominency *circa genitalia*, which, as it was not at all painful and very little troublesome, I had strangely neglected for many years? But since my departure from Sheffield Place it has increased most stupendously, is increasing, and ought to be diminished. Yesterday I sent for Farquhar, who is allowed to be a very skilful surgeon. After viewing and palping, he very seriously desired to call in assistance, and has examined it again to-day with Mr. Cline, a surgeon, as he says, of the first eminence. They both pronounce it a hydrocele, a collection of water, which must be let out by the operation of tapping; but, from its magnitude and long neglect, they think it a most extraordinary case, and wish to have another surgeon, Dr. Bayley, present. If the business should go off smoothly, I shall be delivered from my burthen (it is almost as big as a small child), and walk about in four or five days with a truss. But the medical gentlemen, who never speak quite plain, insinuate to me the possibility of inflammation, of fever, &c. I am not appalled at the thoughts of the operation, which is fixed for Wednesday next, twelve o'clock; but it has occurred to me that you might wish to be present, before and afterwards, till the crisis was past; and to give you that opportunity, I shall solicit a delay till Thursday, or even Friday. In the meanwhile I crawl about with some labour, and much indecency, to Devonshire House, where I left all the fine ladies making flannel waistcoats, Lady Lucan's, &c. Adieu. Varnish the business for the ladies; yet I am afraid it will be public—the advantage of being notorious.—Ever yours.

Immediately on receiving the last letter, I went the same day from Brighthelmstone to London, and was agreeably surprised to find that Mr. Gibbon had dined at Lord Lucan's, and did not return to his lodgings, where I waited for him till eleven o'clock at night. Those who have seen him within the last eight or ten years must be surprised to hear that he could doubt whether his disorder was apparent. When he returned to England in 1787, I was greatly alarmed by a prodigious increase, which I always conceived to proceed from a rupture. I did not understand why he, who had talked with me on every other subject relative to himself and his affairs without reserve, should never in any shape hint at a malady so troublesome; but on speaking to his *valet de chambre*, he told me Mr. Gibbon could not bear the least allusion to that subject, and never would suffer him to notice it. I consulted some medical persons, who, with me, supposing it to be a rupture, were of opinion that nothing could be done, and said that he surely must have had advice, and of course had taken all necessary precautions. He now talked freely with me about his disorder, which, he said, began in the year 1761; that he then consulted Mr. Hawkins, the surgeon, who did not decide whether it was the beginning of a rupture or an hydrocele, but he desired to see Mr. Gibbon again when he came to town. Mr. Gibbon not feeling any pain nor suffering any inconvenience, as he said, never returned to Mr. Hawkins; and although the disorder continued to increase gradually, and of late years very much indeed, he never mentioned it to any person, however incredible it may appear, from 1761 to November 1793. I told him that I had always supposed there was no doubt of its being a rupture; his answer was, that he never thought so, and that he and the surgeons who attended him were of opinion that it was an hydrocele. It is now certain that it was originally a rupture, and that an hydrocele had lately taken place in the same part; and it is remarkable that his legs, which had been swelled about the ankle, particularly one of them, since he had the erysipelas in 1790, recovered their former shape as soon as the water appeared in another part, which did not happen till

between the time he left Sheffield Place, in the beginning of October, and his arrival at Althorpe, towards the latter end of that month. On the Thursday following the date of his last letter Mr. Gibbon was tapped for the first time; four quarts of a transparent watery fluid were discharged by that operation. Neither inflammation nor fever ensued; the tumour was diminished to nearly half its size; the remaining part was a soft, irregular mass. I had been with him two days before, and I continued with him above a week after the first tapping, during which time he enjoyed his usual spirits; and the three medical gentlemen who attended him will recollect his pleasantry, even during the operation. He was abroad again in a few days, but the water evidently collecting very fast, it was agreed that a second puncture should be made a fortnight after the first. Knowing that I should be wanted at a meeting in the country, he pressed me to attend it, and promised that soon after the second operation was performed he would follow me to Sheffield Place; but before he arrived I received the two following Letters:—

Mr. GIBBON *to* LORD SHEFFIELD, *at Brighton.*

ST. JAMES'S STREET, *Nov.* 25, 1793.

Though Farquhar has promised to write you a line, I conceive you may not be sorry to hear directly from me. The operation of yesterday was much longer, more searching, and more painful than the former; but it has eased and lightened me to a much greater degree.[1] No inflammation, no fever, a delicious night, leave to go abroad to-morrow, and to go out of town when I please, *en attendant* the future measures of a radical cure. If you hold your intention of returning next Saturday to Sheffield Place, I shall probably join you about the Tuesday following, after having passed two nights at Beckenham.[2] The Devons are going to Bath, and the hospitable Craufurd follows them. I passed a delightful day with Burke; an odd one with Monsignore

[1] Three quarts of the same fluid as before were discharged.

[2] Eden Farm.

Erskine, the Pope's Nuncio. Of public news, you and the papers know more than I do. We seem to have strong sea and land hopes; nor do I dislike the Royalists having beaten the *Sans Culottes* and taken Dol. How many minutes will it take to guillotine the seventy-three new members of the Convention who are now arrested? Adieu.—Ever yours.

To the Same.

St. James's Street, *Nov.* 30, 1793.

It will not be in my power to reach Sheffield Place quite so soon as I wished and expected. Lord Auckland informs me that he shall be at Lambeth next week, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. I have therefore agreed to dine at Beckenham on Friday. Saturday will be spent there, and unless some extraordinary temptation should detain me another day, you will see me by four o'clock Sunday the 9th of December. I dine tomorrow with the Chancellor at Hampstead, and, what I do not like at this time of the year, without a proposal to stay all night. Yet I would not refuse, more especially as I had denied him on a former day. My health is good; but I shall have a final interview with Farquhar before I leave town. We are still in darkness about Lord Howe and the French ships, but hope seems to preponderate. Adieu. Nothing that relates to Louisa can be forgotten.—Ever yours.

Mr. Gibbon generally took the opportunity of passing a night or two with his friend Lord Auckland at Eden Farm, ten miles from London, on his passage to Sheffield Place; and notwithstanding his indisposition, he had lately made an excursion thither from London, when he was much pleased by meeting the Archbishop of Canterbury, of whom he expressed a high opinion. He returned to London to dine with Lord Loughborough, to meet Mr. Burke, Mr. Windham, and particularly Mr. Pitt, with whom he was not acquainted; and in his last journey to Sussex he revisited Eden Farm, and was much gratified by the opportunity of

again seeing, during a whole day, Mr. Pitt, who passed the night there. From Lord Auckland's Mr. Gibbon proceeded to Sheffield Place, and his discourse was never more brilliant nor more entertaining than on his arrival. The parallels he drew and the comparisons he made between the leading men of this country were sketched in his best manner, and were infinitely interesting. However, this last visit to Sheffield Place became far different from any he had ever made before. That ready, cheerful, various, and illuminating conversation which we had before admired in him was not now always to be found in the library or the dining-room. He moved with difficulty, and retired from company sooner than he had been used to do. On the 23rd of December his appetite began to fail him. He observed to me that it was a very bad sign with him when he could not eat his breakfast, which he had done at all times very heartily; and this seems to have been the strongest expression of apprehension that he was ever observed to utter. A considerable degree of fever now made its appearance. Inflammation arose from the weight and the bulk of the tumour. Water again collected very fast, and when the fever went off he never entirely recovered his appetite, even for breakfast. I became very uneasy indeed at his situation towards the end of the month, and thought it necessary to advise him to set out for London. He had before settled his plan to arrive there about the middle of January. I had company in the house, and we expected one of his particular friends, but he was obliged to sacrifice all social pleasure to the immediate attention which his health required. He went to London on the 7th of January, and the next day I received the following billet, the last he ever wrote :—

EDWARD GIBBON, Esq., *to* LORD SHEFFIELD.

ST. JAMES'S STREET, *four o'clock, Tuesday.*

This date says everything. I was almost killed between Sheffield Place and East Grinstead, by hard, frozen, long, and cross ruts, that would disgrace the approach of an Indian wigwam. The rest was something less painful, and I reached this place half

dead, but not seriously feverish or ill. I found a dinner invitation from Lord Lucan; but what are dinners to me? I wish they did not know of my departure. I catch the flying post. What an effort! Adieu till Thursday or Friday.

By his own desire I did not follow him till Thursday the 9th. I then found him far from well, the tumour more distended than before, inflamed, and ulcerated in several places. Remedies were applied to abate the inflammation, but it was not thought proper to puncture the tumour for the third time till Monday the 13th of January, when no less than six quarts of fluid were discharged. He seemed much relieved by the evacuation. His spirits continued good. He talked, as usual, of passing his time at houses which he had often frequented with great pleasure, the Duke of Devonshire's, Mr. Craufurd's, Lord Spenser's, Lord Lucan's, Sir Ralph Payne's, and Mr. Batt's; and when I told him that I should not return to the country, as I had intended, he pressed me to go, knowing I had an engagement there on public business. He said, "You may be back on Saturday, and I intend to go on Thursday to Devonshire House." I had not any apprehension that his life was in danger, although I began to fear that he might not be restored to a comfortable state, and that motion would be very troublesome to him; but he talked of a radical cure. He said that it was fortunate the disorder had shown itself while he was in England, where he might procure the best assistance; and if a radical cure could not be obtained before his return to Lausanne, there was an able surgeon at Geneva who could come to tap him when it should be necessary.

On Tuesday the 14th, when the risk of inflammation and fever from the last operation was supposed to be over, as the medical gentlemen who attended him expressed no fears for his life, I went that afternoon part of the way to Sussex, and the following day reached Sheffield Place. The next morning, the 16th, I received by the post a good account of Mr. Gibbon, which mentioned also that he hourly gained strength. In the evening came a letter by express, dated noon that day, which acquainted me

that Mr. Gibbon had had a violent attack the preceding night, and that it was not probable he should live till I could come to him. I reached his lodgings in St. James's Street about midnight, and learned that my friend had expired a quarter before one o'clock that day, the 16th of January 1794.

After I left him on Tuesday afternoon, the 14th, he saw some company, Lady Lucan and Lady Spenser, and thought himself well enough at night to omit the opium draught, which he had been used to take for some time. He slept very indifferently; before nine the next morning he rose, but could not eat his breakfast. However, he appeared tolerably well, yet complained at times of a pain in his stomach. At one o'clock he received a visit of an hour from Madame de Sylva, and at three his friend, Mr. Craufurd of Auchinames, whom he always mentioned with particular regard, called, and stayed with him till past five o'clock. They talked, as usual, on various subjects; and twenty hours before his death Mr. Gibbon happened to fall into a conversation, not uncommon with him, on the probable duration of his life. He said that he thought himself a good life for ten, twelve, or perhaps twenty years. About six he ate the wing of a chicken and drank three glasses of Madeira. After dinner he became very uneasy and impatient, complained a good deal, and appeared so weak that his servant was alarmed. Mr. Gibbon had sent to his friend and relation, Mr. Robert Darell, whose house was not far distant, desiring to see him, and adding that he had something particular to say. But, unfortunately, this desired interview never took place.

During the evening he complained much of his stomach, and of a disposition to vomit. Soon after nine he took his opium draught and went to bed. About ten he complained of much pain, and desired that warm napkins might be applied to his stomach. He almost incessantly expressed a sense of pain till about four o'clock in the morning, when he said he found his stomach much easier. About seven the servant asked whether he should send for Mr. Farquhar. He answered, no; that he was as well as he had been the day before. At about half-past

eight he got out of bed, and said he was "*plus adroit*" than he had been for three months past, and got into bed again without assistance, better than usual. About nine he said that he would rise. The servant, however, persuaded him to remain in bed till Mr. Farquhar, who was expected at eleven, should come. Till about that hour he spoke with great facility. Mr. Farquhar came at the time appointed, and he was then visibly dying. When the *valet de chambre* returned, after attending Mr. Farquhar out of the room, Mr. Gibbon said, "*Pourquoi est ce que vous me quittez?*" This was about half-past eleven. At twelve he drank some brandy and water from a teapot, and desired his favourite servant to stay with him. These were the last words he pronounced articulately. To the last he preserved his senses; and when he could no longer speak, his servant having asked a question, he made a sign, to show that he understood him. He was quite tranquil, and did not stir; his eys half shut. About a quarter before one he ceased to breathe.[1]

[1] The body was not opened till the fifth day after his death. It was then found, that a degree of mortification, not very considerable, had taken place on a part of the colon, which, with the whole of the omentum, of a very enlarged size, had descended into the scrotum, forming a bag that hung down nearly as low as the knee. Since that part had been inflamed and ulcerated, Mr. Gibbon could not bear a truss; and when the last six quarts of fluid were discharged, the colon and omentum descending lower, they, by their weight, drew the lower mouth of the stomach downwards to the os pubis, and this probably was the immediate cause of his death.

The following is the account of the appearance of the body given by an eminent surgeon who opened it:—

"Aperto tumore, qui ab inguine usque ad genu se extenderat, observatum est partem ejus inferiorem constare ex tunicâ vaginali testis continenti duas quasi libras liquoris serosi tincti sanguine. Ea autem fuit sacci illius amplitudo ut portioni liquoris longè majori capiendæ sufficeret. In posteriori parte hujus sacci testis situs fuit. Hunc omninò sanum invenimus.

"Partem tumoris superiorem occupaverant integrum ferè omentum et major pars intestini coli. Hæ partes, sacco sibi proprio inclusæ, sibi invicem et sacco suo adeò arctè adhæserunt ut coïvisse viderentur in massam unam solidam et irregularem; cujus a tergo chorda spermatica sedem suam obtinuerat.

"In omento et in intestino colo haud dubia recentis inflammationis signa vidimus, necnon maculas nonnullas lividi coloris hinc inde sparsas.

"Aperto abdomine, ventriculum invenimus a naturali suo situ detractum usque ad annulum musculi obliqui externi. Pylorum retrorsùm et quasi sursùm a duodeno retractum. In hepate ingentem numerum parvorum tuberculorum. Vesicam [illegible] bile admodùm distentam. In cæteris visceribus, examini anatomico sub- [illegible] morbi vestigia extiterunt."

The *valet de chambre* observed that Mr. Gibbon did not at any time show the least sign of alarm or apprehension of death, and it does not appear that he ever thought himself in danger, unless his desire to speak to Mr. Darell may be considered in that light.

Perhaps I dwell too long on these minute and melancholy circumstances. Yet the close of such a life can hardly fail to interest every reader, and I know that the public has received a different and erroneous account of my friend's last hours.

I can never cease to feel regret that I was not by his side at this awful period—a regret so strong that I can express it only by borrowing, as the eloquent Mr. Mason has done on a similar occasion, the forcible language of Tacitus: "Mihi præter acerbitatem amici erepti, auget mæstitiam quod assidere valetudini, fovere deficientem, satiari vultu, complexu non contigit." It is some consolation to me that I have not, like Tacitus, by a long absence, anticipated the loss of my friend several years before his decease. Although I had not the mournful gratification of being near him on the day he expired, yet during his illness I had not failed to attend him with that assiduity which his genius, his virtues, and above all our long, uninterrupted, and happy friendship demanded.

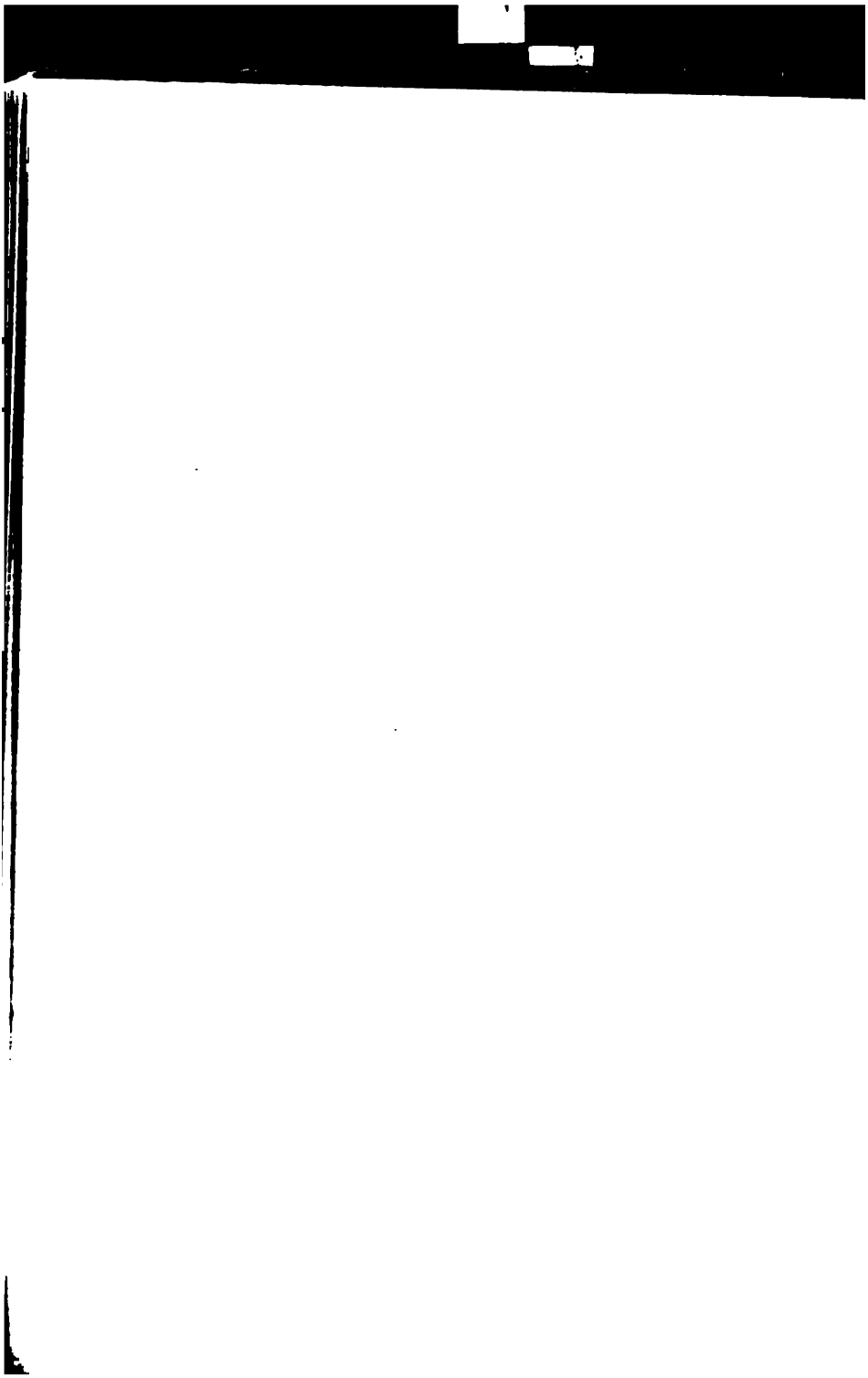
POSTSCRIPT.

Mr. Gibbon's Will is dated the 1st of October 1791, just before I left Lausanne; he distinguishes me, as usual, in the most flattering manner:—

"I constitute and appoint the Right Honourable John Lord Sheffield, Edward Darell, Esquire, and John Thomas Batt, Esquire, to be the Executors of this my last Will and Testament; and as the execution of this trust will not be attended with much difficulty or trouble, I shall indulge these gentlemen in the pleasure of this last disinterested service, without wronging my feelings or oppressing my heir by too light or too weighty a testimony of my gratitude. My obligations to the long and active friendship of Lord Sheffield I could never sufficiently repay."

He then observes that the Right Hon. Lady Eliot, of Port Eliot, is his nearest relation on the father's side, but that her three sons are in such prosperous circumstances, that he may well be excused for making the two children of his late uncle, Sir Stanier Porten, his heirs; they being in a very different situation. He bequeaths annuities to two old servants (£3000), and his furniture, plate, &c., at Lausanne to M. Wilhelm de Severy; a hundred guineas to the poor of Lausanne, and fifty guineas each to the following persons:—Lady Sheffield and daughters, Maria and Louisa, Madame and Mademoiselle de Severy, the Count de Schomberg, Mademoiselle la Chanoinesse de Polier, and M. le Ministre Le Vade, for the purchase of some token which may remind them of a sincere friend. The remains of Mr. Gibbon were deposited in Lord Sheffield's family burial-place in Sussex.

APPENDIX.



LETTERS

TO AND FROM

EDWARD GIBBON, ESQUIRE.

No. I.

Mr. GIBBON *to* Mrs. PORTEN.

LAUSANNE, 1756.

DEAR MADAM,—Fear no reproaches for your negligence, however great; for your silence, however long. I love you too well to make you any. Nothing, in my opinion, is so ridiculous as some kind of friends, wives, and lovers, who look on no crime as so heinous as the letting slip a post without writing. The charm of friendship is liberty, and he that would destroy the one destroys, without designing it, the better half of the other. I compare friendship to charity, and letters to alms; the last signifies nothing without the first, and very often the first is very strong, although it does not show itself by the other. It is not goodwill which is wanting, it is only opportunities or means. However, one month—two months—three months—four months—I began not to be angry, but to be uneasy for fear some accident had happened to you. I was often on the point of writing, but was always stopped by the hopes of hearing from you the next post. Besides, not to flatter you, your excuse is a very bad one. You cannot entertain me by your letters. I think I ought to know that better than you; and I assure you that one of your plain, sincere letters entertains me more than the most polished one of Pliny or

Cicero. 'Tis your heart speaks, and I look on your heart as much better in its way than either of their heads.

Out of pure politeness I ought to talk of —— before myself. I was some hours with him in this place; that is to say, almost all the time he was here. I find him always . . . . . always good-natured, always amusing, and always trifling. I asked him some questions about Italy. He told me he hurried out of it as soon as he could, because there was no French comedy, and he did not love the Italian Opera. I let slip some words of the pleasure he should have of seeing his native country again, on account of the services he could render her in Parliament. "Yes," says he, "I want vastly to be at London; there are three years since I have seen Garrick." He spoke to me of you, and indeed not only with consideration, but with affection. Were there nothing else valuable in his character, I should love him because he loves you. He told me he intended to see you as soon as he should be in England. I am glad he has kept his word. I was so taken up with my old friend that I could not speak a word to ——. He appeared, however, a good, sensible, modest young man. Poor Minorca indeed thus lost! But poor Englishmen who have lost it! I think the second exclamation still stronger than the first. Poor Lord Torrington! I can't help pitying him. What a shameful uncle he has! I shall lose all my opinion of my countrymen if the whole nation, Whigs, Tories, courtiers, Jacobites, &c. &c. &c. &c., are not unanimous in detesting that man. Pray is there any truth in a story we had here, of a brother of Admiral Byng's having killed himself out of rage and shame? I did not think he had any brothers alive. It is thought here that Byng will be acquitted. I hope not. Though I do not love rash judgments, I cannot help thinking him guilty.

You ask me when I shall come into England. How should I know it? The 14th of June I wrote to my father, and saying nothing of my return, which I knew would have been to no purpose, I desired him to give me a fixed allowance of £200 a year, or at least to allow me a servant. No answer. About

a fortnight ago I renewed my request, and I cannot yet know what will be my success. I design to make a virtue of necessity to keep quiet during this winter, and to put in use all my machines next spring in order to come over.[1] I shall write the strongest, and at the same time the most dutiful, letter I can imagine to my father. If all that produces no effect, I don't know what I can do.

You talk to me of my cousin Ellison's wedding, but you don't say a word of who she is married to. Is it Elliot? Though you have not seen my father yet, I suppose you have heard of him. How was he in town? His wife, was she with him? Has marriage produced any changement in his way of living? Is he to be always at Beriton, or will he come up to London in winter? Pray have you ever seen my mother-in-law, or heard anything more of her character? Compliments to everybody that makes me compliments—to the Gilberts, to the Comarques, to Lord Newnham, &c. When you see the Comarques again, ask them if they did not know, at Putney, Monsieur la Vabre and his daughters. Perhaps you know them yourself. I saw them lately in this country, one of them very well married.

The Englishman who lodges in our house is little sociable, at least for a reasonable person. My health always good, my studies pretty good. I understand Greek pretty well. I have even some kind of correspondence with several learned men—with Mr. Crevier of Paris, with Mr. Breitinger of Zurich, and with Mr. Allamand, a clergyman of this country, the most reasonable divine I ever knew. Do you never read now? I am a little piqued that you say nothing of Sir Charles Grandison; if you have not read it yet, read it for my sake. Perhaps Clarissa does not encourage you; but in my opinion it is much superior to Clarissa. When you have read it, read the letters of Madame de Sevigné to her daughter; I don't doubt of their being translated into English. They are properly what I called in the beginning of my letter, letters of the heart; the natural expressions of a mother's fondness; regret at their being at a great

[1] This letter is a curious specimen of the degree in which Mr. Gibbon had lost the English language in a short time.

distance from one another, and continual schemes to get together again. All that—won't it please you? There is scarce anything else in six whole volumes, and notwithstanding that, few people read them without finding them too short. Adieu; my paper is at an end. I don't dare to tell you to write soon. Do it, however, if you can.—Yours affectionately, E. GIBBON.

No. II.

Rev. Dr. WALDGRAVE[1] *to* EDWARD GIBBON, Esq., Junior.

WASHINGTON, near STORRINGTON, *Dec.* 7, 1758.

DEAR SIR,—I have read nothing for some time (and I keep reading on still) that has given me so much pleasure as your letter, which I received by the last post. I rejoice at your return to your country, to your father, and to the good principles of truth and reason. Had I in the least suspected your design of leaving us, I should immediately have put you upon reading Mr. Chillingworth's Religion of Protestants, any one page of which is worth a library of Swiss divinity. It will give me great pleasure to see you at Washington, where I am, I thank God, very well and very happy. I desire my respects to Mr. Gibbon, and am, with very great regard, dear Sir,—Your most affectionate, humble servant, THO. WALDGRAVE.

No. III.

Mr. GIBBON *to his* FATHER.

1760.

DEAR SIR,—An address in writing, from a person who has the pleasure of being with you every day, may appear singular. However, I have preferred this method, as upon paper I can speak without a blush and be heard without interruption. If my letter displeases you, impute it, dear Sir, only to yourself. You have treated me, not like a son, but like a friend. Can you be sur-

[1] Tutor to Mr. Gibbon when he first went to Magdalen College, Oxford.

prised that I should communicate to a friend all my thoughts and all my desires? Unless the friend approve them, let the father never know them, or at least let him know at the same time, that, however reasonable, however eligible, my scheme may appear to me, I would rather forget it for ever than cause him the slightest uneasiness.

When I first returned to England, attentive to my future interest, you were so good as to give me hopes of a seat in Parliament. This seat, it was supposed, would be an expense of £1500. This design flattered my vanity, as it might enable me to shine in so august an assembly. It flattered a nobler passion; I promised myself that by the means of this seat I might be one day the instrument of some good to my country. But I soon perceived how little a mere virtuous inclination, unassisted by talents, could contribute towards that great end, and a very short examination discovered to me that those talents had not fallen to my lot. Do not, dear Sir, impute this declaration to a false modesty, the meanest species of pride. Whatever else I may be ignorant of, I think I know myself, and shall always endeavour to mention my good qualities without vanity and my defects without repugnance. I shall say nothing of the most intimate acquaintance with his country and language, so absolutely necessary to every senator. Since they may be acquired, to allege my deficiency in them would seem only the plea of laziness. But I shall say with great truth, that I never possessed that gift of speech, the first requisite of an orator, which use and labour may improve, but which nature alone can bestow; that my temper, quiet, retired, somewhat reserved, could neither acquire popularity, bear up against opposition, nor mix with ease in the crowds of public life; that even my genius (if you will allow me any) is better qualified for the deliberate compositions of the closet than for the extemporary discourses of the Parliament. An unexpected objection would disconcert me; and as I am incapable of explaining to others what I do not thoroughly understand myself, I should be meditating while I ought to be answering. I even want necessary prejudices of party and of

nation. In popular assemblies it is often necessary to inspire them, and never orator inspired well a passion which he did not feel himself. Suppose me even mistaken in my own character, to set out with the repugnance such an opinion must produce offers but an indifferent prospect. But I hear you say it is not necessary that every man should enter into Parliament with such exalted hopes. It is to acquire a title the most glorious of any in a free country, and to employ the weight and consideration it gives in the service of one's friends. Such motives, though not glorious, yet are not dishonourable; and if we had a borough in our command, if you could bring me in without any great expense, or if our fortune enabled us to despise that expense, then indeed I should think them of the greatest strength. But, with our private fortune, is it worth while to purchase, at so high a rate, a title, honourable in itself, but which I must share with every fellow that can lay out £1500? Besides, dear Sir, a merchandise is of little value to the owner when he is resolved not to sell it.

I should affront your penetration did I not suppose you now see the drift of this letter. It is to appropriate to another use the sum with which you destined to bring me into Parliament; to employ it, not in making me great, but in rendering me happy. I have often heard you say yourself, that the allowance you had been so indulgent as to grant me, though very liberal in regard to your estate, was yet but small when compared with the almost necessary extravagances of the age. I have indeed found it so, notwithstanding a good deal of economy and an exemption from many of the common expenses of youth. This, dear Sir, would be a way of supplying these deficiencies without any additional expense to you. But I forbear. If you think my proposals reasonable, you want no entreaties to engage you to comply with them; if otherwise, all will be without effect.

All that I am afraid of, dear Sir, is, that I should seem not so much asking a favour, as this really is, as exacting a debt. After all I can say, you will still remain the best judge of my good and your own circumstances. Perhaps, like most landed gentlemen, an addition to my annuity would suit you better than a sum of

money given at once; perhaps the sum itself may be too considerable. Whatever you shall think proper to bestow upon me, or in whatever manner, will be received with equal gratitude.

I intended to stop here, but as I abhor the least appearance of art, I think it will be better to lay open my whole scheme at once. The unhappy war which now desolates Europe will oblige me to defer seeing France till a peace. But that reason can have no influence upon Italy, a country which every scholar must long to see. Should you grant my request, and not disapprove of my manner of employing your bounty, I would leave England this autumn and pass the winter at Lausanne with M. de Voltaire and my old friends. The armies no longer obstruct my passage, and it must be indifferent to you whether I am at Lausanne or at London during the winter, since I shall not be at Beriton. In the spring I would cross the Alps, and after some stay in Italy, as the war must then be terminated, return home through France, to live happily with you and my dear mother. I am now two-and-twenty; a tour must take up a considerable time, and though I believe you have no thoughts of settling me soon (and I am sure I have not), yet so many things may intervene, that the man who does not travel early runs a great risk of not travelling at all. But this part of my scheme, as well as the whole, I submit entirely to you.

Permit me, dear Sir, to add that I do not know whether the complete compliance with my wishes could increase my love and gratitude, but that I am very sure no refusal could diminish those sentiments with which I shall always remain, dear Sir, your most dutiful and obedient son and servant,

E. GIBBON, Junior.

No. IV.

Mr. MALLET *to* Mr. GIBBON.

1761.

DEAR SIR,—I could not procure you a ticket for the coronation without putting you to the expense of ten guineas. But

now I send you something much more valuable, which will cost you only a groat. When will your father or you be in town? Desire Becket to send me one of your books, well bound, for myself. All the other copies I gave away, as Duke Desenany drank out ten dozen of Lord Bolingbroke's champagne in his absence—to your honour and glory. I need not tell you that I am, most affectionately, the Major's and your very humble servant, D. MALLET.

Turn over, read, and be delighted. Let your father too read.

J'ai lu avec autant d'avidité que de satisfaction le bon et agréable ouvrage, dont l'auteur m'a fait présent. Je parle comme si M. Gibbon ne m'avoit pas loué, et même un peu trop fort. J'ai lu le livre d'un citoyen du monde, d'un véritable homme de lettres, qui les aime pour elles mêmes, sans exception ni prévention, et qui joint à beaucoup d'esprit, le bon sens plus rare que l'esprit, ainsi qu'une impartialité qui le rend juste et modeste, malgré l'impression qu'il a du reçevoir des auteurs sans nombre qu'il a lus, et tres bien lus. J'ai donc dévoré ce petit ouvrage, auquel je désirerois de bon cœur une plus grande étendue, et que je voudrois faire lire à tout le monde.

Je témoigne aussi à my Lady Hervey l'obligation que je lui ai de m'avoir fait connoître un auteur qui prouve à chaque mot que la littérature n'est ennemie que de l'ignorance et des travers, qui mérite d'avoir des Maty pour amis, et qui d'ailleurs honore et fortifie notre langue par l'usage que son esprit en sait faire. Si j'étois plus savant, j'appuyerois sur le mérite des discussions, et sur la justesse des observations. CAYLUS.

I read with as much eagerness as pleasure the excellent and agreeable work with which the author presented me. I speak as if Mr. Gibbon had not praised me, and that too warmly. His work is that of a real man of letters, who loves them for their own sake, without exception or prejudice, and who unites with much talent the more precious gift of good sense, and an impartiality that displays his candour and justice, in spite of the

bias that he must have received from the innumerable authors whom he has read and studied. I have therefore perused, with the greatest avidity, this little work, and wish that it was more extensive and read universally.

I would also express my thanks to Lady Hervey for making me acquainted with an author who proves in every page that learning is hostile only to ignorance and prejudice, who deserves to have a Maty for his friend, and who adds honour and strength to our language by the use which he so ably makes of it. Were I more learned I should dwell on the merit of the discussions and the justness of the observations.

CAYLUS.

No. V.

GEO. LEWIS SCOTT, Esq., *to* EDWARD GIBBON, Junior.

Supposing you settled in quarters, dear Sir, I obey your commands, and send you my thoughts, relating to the pursuit of your mathematical studies. You told me you had read Clairaut's Algebra and the three first books of L'Hôpital's Conic Sections. You did not mention the Elements of Geometry you had perused. Whatever they were, whether Euclid's or by some other, you will do well, if you have not applied yourself that way for some time past, to go over them again and render the conclusions familiar to your memory. You may defer, however, a very critical inquiry into the principles and reasoning of geometers till Dr. Simson's new edition of Euclid, now in the press, appears. I would have you study that book well. In the meantime recapitulate Clairaut and L'Hôpital, so far as you have gone, and then go through the remainder of the Marquis's books with care. The fifth book will be an introduction to the *Analyse des Infiniment petits*, to which I would advise you to proceed after finishing the Conic Sections. The *Infiniment petits* may want a comment. Crousaz has written one, but it is a wretched performance; he did not understand the first principles of the science he under-

took to illustrate, and his Geometry shows that he did not understand the first principles of geometry. There is a posthumous work of M. Varignon's, called *Eclaircissemens sur l'Analyse des Infiniment petits;* Paris, 1725, 4to. This will be often of use to you. However, it must be owned that the notion of the *Infiniment petits*, or *Infinitesimals*, as we call them, is too bold an assumption, and too remote from the principles of the ancients, our masters in geometry, and has given a handle to an ingenious author (Berkeley, late Bishop of Cloyne) to attack the logic of modern mathematicians. He has been answered by many, but by none so clearly as by Mr. Maclaurin in his Fluxions (2 vols. in 4to), where you will meet with a collection of the most valuable discoveries in the mathematical and physico-mathematical sciences. I recommend this author to you; but whether you ought to read him immediately after M. de l'Hôpital may be a question. I think you may be satisfied at first with reading his Introduction, and chap. i. Book i. of the grounds of the Method of Fluxions, and then proceed to chap. xii. of the same book, §§ 495 to 505 inclusive, where he treats of the Method of Infinitesimals and of the Limits of Ratios. You may then read chap. i. Book ii. §§ 697 to 714 inclusive; and this you may do immediately after reading the first section of the *Analyse des Infiniment petits*. Or if you please, you may postpone a critical inquiry into the principles of Infinitesimals and Fluxions till you have seen the use and application of this doctrine in the drawing of Tangents, and in finding the Maxima and Minima of Geometrical Magnitudes (*Anal. des Infin. pet.*, §§ 2 and 3).

When you have read the beginning of L'Hôpital's 4th sect. to sect. 65 inclusive, you may read Maclaurin's chaps. ii., iii., and iv., where he fully explains the nature of these higher orders of Fluxions, and applies the notion to geometrical figures. Your principles being then firmly established, you may then finish M. de l'Hôpital.

Your next step must be to the inverse method of Fluxions, called by the French *Calcul integral*. Monsieur de Bougainville has given us a treatise upon this subject, Paris, 1754, 4to, under

the title, *Traité du Calcul integral pour servir de suite a l'Analyse des Infiniment petits.* You should have it. But though he explains the methods hitherto found out for the determination of Fluents from given Fluxions, or in the French style, *pour trouver les integrales des différences données*, yet, as he has not shown the use and application of this doctrine, as De l'Hôpital did with respect to that part which he treats of, M. de Bougainville's book is, for that reason, not so well suited to beginners as could be wished. You may therefore take Carré's book in 4to, printed at Paris, 1700, and entitled, *Méthode pour la Mesure des Surfaces, &c., par l'Application du Calcul integral.* Only I must caution you against depending upon him in his fourth section, where he treats of the centre of oscillation and percussion, he having made several mistakes there, as M. de Mairan has shown, p. 196, *Mem. de l'Acad. Royale des Sciences*, edit. Paris, 1735. After Carré you may read Bougainville.

I have recommended French authors to you because you are a thorough master of that language, and because, by their studying style and clearness of expression, they seem to me best adapted to beginners. Our authors are often profound and acute, but their laconisms and neglect of expression often perplex beginners. I except Mr. Maclaurin, who is very clear; but then he has such a vast variety of matter that a great part of his book is, on that account, too difficult for a beginner. I might recommend other authors to you as a course of elements; for instance, you might read Mr. Thomas Simpson's Geometry, Algebra, Trigonometry, and Fluxions, all which contain a great variety of good things. In his Geometry he departs from Euclid without a sufficient reason. However, you may read him after Dr. Robert Simson's Euclid, or together with it, and take notice of what is new in Thomas Simpson. His Algebra you may join with Clairaut; and the rather that Clairaut has been sparing of particular problems, and has, besides, omitted several useful applications of Algebra. Simpson's Fluxions may go hand in hand with L'Hôpital, Maclaurin, Carré, and Bougainville. If you come to have a competent knowledge of these authors you will be far advanced, and

you may proceed to the works of Newton, Cotes, the Bernoullis, De Moivre, &c., as your inclination and time will permit. Sir Isaac Newton's treatise of the Quadrature of Curves has been well commended by Mr. Stewart, and is of itself a good institution of Fluxions. Sir Isaac's Algebra is commended in several places by Clairaut, and in more in Maclaurin's Algebra; and Newton's famous *Principia* are explained by the *Minims Jacquirs et le Seur*, Geneva, 4 vols. 4to. Cotes is explained by Don Walmesley in his *Analyse des Mesures*, &c., Paris, 4to. You see you may find work enough. But my paper bids me subscribe myself, dear Sir, your most obedient servant, GEO. LEWIS SCOTT.

LEICESTER SQUARE, *May* 7, 1762.

P.S.—But I recollect, a little late, that the books I have mentioned, excepting Newton's *Principia*, and the occasional problems in the rest, treat only of the abstract parts of the Mathematics, and you are, no doubt, willing to look into the concrete parts, or what is called Mixed Mathematics, and the Physico-mathematical Sciences. Of these the principal are mechanics, optics, and astronomy. As to the principles of mechanics, M. d'Alembert has recommended M. Trabaud's *Principes du Mouvement et de l'Équilibre* to beginners, and you cannot do better than to study this book. In optics we have Dr. Smith's Complete System, 2 vols. 4to. I wish, though, we had a good institution, short and clear, the Doctor's book entering into too great details for beginners. However, you may consider his first book, or popular treatise, as an institution, and you will from thence acquire a good deal of knowledge. In astronomy I recommend M. le Monnier's *Institutions Astronomiques*, in 4to. Paris, 1746. It is a translation from Keil's Astronomical Lectures, but with considerable additions. You should also have Cassini's *Élémens d'Astronomie*, 2 vols. 4to. As to the physical causes of the celestial motions, after having read Maclaurin's account of Sir Isaac Newton's philosophical discoveries, and Dr. Pemberton's view of Sir Isaac's philosophy, you may read the great author himself, with the comment. But if you read Maclaurin's Fluxions

throughout, you will find many points of Sir Isaac's philosophy well explained there. The theory of light and colours should be studied in Sir Isaac himself. In the English edition of his Optics, 8vo, there is a branch of the optical sciences which I have not mentioned; that is, Perspective. Dr. Brook Taylor's is the best system, but his style and expression is embarrassed and obscure. L'Abbé de la Caille has also given a good treatise of Perspective at the end of his *Optique*. These are of use to painters; but the theory of mathematical projection in general is more extensive, and has been well treated of by old writers, Clavius, Aguillonius, Tacquet, and De Chules; and lately M. de la Caille has given a memoir among those of the *Acad. Roy. des Sciences* of Paris, *anno* 1741, *sur le calcul des projections en général.* This subject is necessary for the understanding of the theory of maps and planispheres. Mathematicians have also applied their art to the theory of sounds and music. Dr. Smith's Harmonics is the principal book of the kind.

Thus have I given you some account of the principal elementary authors in the different branches of mathematical knowledge, and it were much to be wished that we had a complete institution, or course, of all these things of a moderate size, which might serve as an introduction to all the good original authors. Wolfius attempted this. His intention was laudable, but his book is so full of errors of the press, besides some of his own, that I cannot recommend him to a beginner. He might be used occasionally for the signification of terms, and for many historical facts relating to mathematics; and, besides, may be considered as a collector of problems, which is useful.

Besides the books I have mentioned, it might be of use to you to have M. Montucla's *Histoire des Mathématiques*, in 2 vols. 4to. You will there find a history of the progress of the mathematical sciences, and some account of the principal authors relating to this subject.

I mentioned to you in conversation the superior elegance of the ancient method of demonstration. If you incline to examine this point, after being well versed in Euclid, you may proceed to

Dr. Simson's Conic Sections; and to form an idea of the ancient analysis or method of investigating the solution of geometrical problems, read Euclid's Data, which Dr. Simson will publish, together with his new edition of Euclid; and then read his *Loci Plani*, in 4to. The elegance of the method of the ancients is confessed; but it seems to require the remembrance of a great multitude of propositions, and in complicated problems it does not seem probable that it can be extended so far as the algebraic method.

No. VI.

EDWARD GIBBON, Esq., *to* Mrs. GIBBON, Beriton.

PARIS, *February* 12, 1763.

DEAR MADAM,—You remember our agreement—short and frequent letters. The first part of the treaty you have no doubt of my observing. I think I ought not to leave you any of the second. *Apropos* of treaty: our definitive one was signed here yesterday, and this morning the Duke of Bridgewater and Mr. Neville went for London with the news of it. The plenipotentiaries sat up till ten o'clock in the morning at the Ambassador of Spain's ball, and then went to sign this treaty, which regulates the fate of Europe.

Paris, in most respects, has fully answered my expectations. I have a number of very good acquaintance, which increase every day; for nothing is so easy as the making them here. Instead of complaining of the want of them, I begin already to think of making a choice. Next Sunday, for instance, I have only three invitations to dinner. Either in the houses you are already acquainted you meet with people who ask you to come and see them, or some of your friends offer themselves to introduce you. When I speak of these connections, I mean chiefly for dinner and the evening. Suppers, as yet, I am pretty much a stranger to, and I fancy shall continue so; for Paris is divided into two species, who have but little communication with each other. The one, who are chiefly connected with the men of letters, dine very much at home, are glad to see their friends, and pass the evenings, till

about nine, in agreeable and rational conversation. The others are the most fashionable, sup in numerous parties, and always play, or rather game, both before and after supper. You may easily guess which sort suits me best. Indeed, Madam, we may say what we please of the frivolity of the French, but I do assure you that in a fortnight passed at Paris I have heard more conversation worth remembering, and seen more men of letters among the people of fashion, than I had done in two or three winters in London.

Amongst my acquaintance I cannot help mentioning M. Helvetius, the author of the famous book *De l'Esprit*. I met him at dinner at Madame Geoffrin's, where he took great notice of me, made me a visit next day, and has ever since treated me, not in a polite but a friendly manner. Besides being a sensible man, an agreeable companion, and the worthiest creature in the world, he has a very pretty wife, an hundred thousand livres a year, and one of the best tables in Paris. The only thing I dislike in him is his great attachment to and admiration for ——, whose character is indeed at Paris beyond anything you can conceive. To the great civility of this foreigner, who was not obliged to take the least notice of me, I must just contrast the behaviour of . . . . . .

No. VII.

Mr. GIBBON *to his* FATHER.

PARIS, *February* 24, 1763.

DEAR SIR,—I received your letter about twelve days after its date, owing, as I apprehend, to Mr. Foley's negligence. My direction is, *A Monsieur Gibbon, Gentilhomme Anglois, à l'Hôtel de Londres, Rue de Columbier, Fauxbourg St. Germains, à Paris.* You see I am still in that part of the town; and indeed, from all the intelligence I could collect, I saw no reason to change, either on account of cheapness or pleasantness. Madame Bontems, Mrs. Mallet's friend, and a Marquis de Mirabeau I got acquainted with at her house have acted a very friendly part, though all their endeavours have only served to convince me that Paris is unavoid-

ably a very dear place. I am sorry to find my English clothes look very foreign. The French are now excessively long-waisted. At present we are in mourning for the Bishop of Liége, the King's uncle, and expect soon another of a singular nature for the old Pretender, who is very ill. They mourn for him not as a crowned head, but as a relation of the King's. I am doubtful how the English here will behave; indeed, we can have no difficulties, since we need only follow the example of the Duke of Bedford.

I have now passed nearly a month in this place, and I can say with truth that it has answered my most sanguine expectations. The buildings of every kind, the libraries, the public diversions, take up a great part of my time; and I have already found several houses where it is both very easy and very agreeable to be acquainted. Lady Hervey's recommendation to Madame Geoffrin was a most excellent one. Her house is a very good one; regular dinners there every Wednesday, and the best company of Paris, in men of letters and people of fashion. It was at her house I connected myself with M. Helvetius, who, from his heart, his head, and his fortune, is a most valuable man.

At his house I was introduced to the Baron d'Holbach, who is a man of parts and fortune, and has two dinners every week. The other houses I am known in are the Duchess d'Aiguillon's, Madame la Comtesse de Froulay's, Madame du Bocage's, Madame Boyer's, M. le Marquis de Mirabeau's, and M. de Foucemagn's. All these people have their different merit. In some I meet with good dinners; in others, societies for the evening; and in all, good sense, entertainment, and civility; which, as I have no favours to ask or business to transact with them, is sufficient for me. Their men of letters are as affable and communicative as I expected. My letters to them did me no harm, but were very little necessary. My book had been of great service to me, and the compliments I have received upon it would make me insufferably vain, if I laid any stress on them. When I take notice of the civilities I have received, I must take notice too of what I have seen of a contrary behaviour. You know how much I always built upon the Count de Caylus: he has not been of the least use

to me. With great difficulty I have seen him, and that is all. I do not, however, attribute his behaviour to pride or dislike to me, but solely to the man's general character, which seems to be a very odd one. De la Motte, Mrs. Mallet's friend, has behaved very drily to me, though I have dined with him twice. But I can forgive him a great deal, in consideration of his having introduced me to M. d'Augny (Mrs. Mallet's son). Her men are generally angels or devils; but here I really think, without being very prone to admiration, that she has said very little too much of him. As far as I can judge, he has certainly an uncommon degree of understanding and knowledge, and, I believe, a great fund of honour and probity. We are very much together, and I think our intimacy seems to be growing into a friendship. Next Sunday we go to Versailles. The King's guard is done by a detachment from Paris, which is relieved every four days, and as he goes upon this command, it is a very good occasion for me to see the palace. I shall not neglect, at the same time, the opportunity of informing myself of the French discipline.

The great news at present is the arrival of a very extraordinary person from the Isle of France in the East Indies. An obscure Frenchman, who has lately come into the island, being very ill, and given over, said that before he died he must discharge his conscience of a great burden he had upon it, and declared to several people he was the accomplice of Damien, and the very person who held the horses. Unluckily for him, the man recovered after this declaration, was immediately sent prisoner to Paris, and is just landed at Port l'Orient, from whence he is daily expected here, to unravel the whole mystery of that dark affair. This story, which at first was laughed at, has now gained entire credit, and I apprehend must be founded on real fact.

A lady of Miss Caryll's acquaintance has desired me to convey the enclosed letter to her. You will be so good as to send it over to Ladyholt. I hope I need say nothing of my sentiments towards our friends at Beriton, nor of my readiness to execute any of their commands here.—I am, dear Sir, most affectionately yours,

E. GIBBON.

No. VIII.

Mr. GIBBON *to* Mr. HOLROYD, at Lausanne.

BORROMEAN ISLANDS, *May* 16, 1764.

DEAR HOLROYD,—Hurry of running about, time taken up with seeing places, &c. &c. &c., are excellent excuses; but I fancy you will guess that my laziness and aversion to writing to my best friend are the real motives, and I am afraid you will have guessed right.

We are at this minute in a most magnificent palace, in the middle of a vast lake, ranging about suites of rooms without a soul to interrupt us, and secluded from the rest of the universe. We shall sit down in a moment to supper, attended by all the Count's household. This is the fine side of the medal: turn to the reverse. We are got here wet to the skin; we have crawled about fine gardens which rain and fogs prevented our seeing; and if to-morrow does not hold up a little better, we shall be in some doubt whether we can say we have seen these famous islands. Guise says yes, and I say no. The Count is not here; we have our supper from a paltry hedge alehouse (excuse the bull), and the servants have offered us beds in the palace, pursuant to their master's directions.

I hardly think you will like Turin; the Court is old and dull, and in that country every one follows the example of the Court. The principal amusement seems to be driving about in your coach in the evening and bowing to the people you meet. If you go while the Royal Family is there, you have the additional pleasure of stopping to salute them every time they pass. I had that advantage fifteen times one afternoon. We were presented to a lady who keeps a public assembly, and a very mournful one it is. The few women that go to it are each taken up by their *cicisbeo*; and a poor Englishman who can neither talk Piedmontois nor play at faro stands by himself, without one of their haughty nobility doing him the honour of speaking to him. You must not attribute this account to our not having stayed long enough to form

connections. It is a general complaint of our countrymen, except of Lord ——, who has been engaged for about two years in the service of a lady whose long nose is her most distinguishing fine feature. The most sociable women I have met with are the King's daughters. I chatted for about a quarter of an hour with them, talked about Lausanne, and grew so very free and easy that I drew my snuffbox, rapped it, took snuff twice (a crime never known before in the presence-chamber), and continued my discourse in my usual attitude of my body bent forwards and my forefinger stretched out.[1] As it might, however, have been difficult to keep up this acquaintance, I chiefly employ my time in seeing places, which fully repaid me in pleasure the trouble of my journey. What entertained me the most was the Museum and the Citadel. The first is under the care of M. Bartoli, who received us, without any introduction, in the politest manner in the world, and was of the greatest service to us, as I dare say he will be to you. The Citadel is a stupendous work; and when you have seen the subterraneous part of it, you will scarcely think it possible such a place can ever be taken. As it is, however, a regular one, it does not pique my curiosity so much as those irregular fortifications hewn out of the Alps, as Exilles, Fenestrelles, and the Brunette would have done, could we have spared the time necessary. Our next stage from Turin has been Milan, where we were mere spectators, as it was not worth while to endeavour at forming connections for so very few days. I think you will be surprised at the great church, but infinitely more so at the regiment of Baden, which is in the citadel. Such steadiness, such alertness in the men, and such exactness in the officers as exceeded all my expectations. Next Friday I shall see the regiment reviewed by General Serbelloni. Perhaps I may write a particular letter about it. From Milan we proceed to Genoa,

[1] This attitude continued to be characteristic of Mr. Gibbon. The engraving in the frontispiece of the Memoirs is taken from the figure of Mr. Gibbon, cut with scissors by Mrs. Brown thirty years after the date of this letter. The extraordinary talents of this lady have furnished as complete a likeness of Mr. Gibbon, as to person, face, and manner, as can be conceived, yet it was done in his absence.—S. —It was a full breadth profile in black.—H. M.

and thence to Florence. You stare, but really we find it so inconvenient to travel like mutes, and to lose a number of curious things for want of being able to assist our eyes with our tongues, that we have resumed our original plan, and leave Venice for next year. I think I should advise you to do the same.

MILAN, *May* 18, 1764.

The next morning was not fair, but, however, we were able to take a view of the islands, which, by the help of some imagination, we conclude to be a very delightful, though not an enchanted place. I would certainly advise you to go there from Milan, which you may very well perform in a day and a half. Upon our return we found Lord Tilney and some other English on their way to Venice. We heard a melancholy piece of news from them: Byng died at Bologna a few days ago of a fever. I am sure you will be all very sorry to hear it.

We expect a volume of news from you in relation to Lausanne, and in particular to the alliance of the Duchess with the Frog. Is it already concluded? How does the bride look after her great revolution? Pray embrace her and the adorable, if you can, in both our names, and assure them, as well as all the Spring,[1] that we talk of them very often, but particularly of a Sunday, and that we are so disconsolate that we have neither of us commenced *cicisbeos* as yet, whatever we may do at Florence. We have drunk the Duchess's health, not forgetting the little woman, on the top of Mont Cenis, in the middle of the Lago Maggiore, &c. &c. I expect some account of the said little woman. Who is my successor? I think —— had begun to supplant me before I went. I expect your answer at Florence, and your person at Rome—which the Lord grant. Amen.

[1] The society of young ladies mentioned in the Memoirs.

No. IX.

The Same to the Same, at Brighton.

BERITON, *October* 31, 1765.

DEAR HOLROYD,—Why did I not leave a letter for you at Marseilles? For a very plain reason, because I did not go to Marseilles. But, as you have most judiciously added, why did not I send one? Humph! I own that nonplusses me a little. However, hearken to my history. After revolving a variety of plans, and suiting them as well as possible to time and finances, Guise and I at last agreed to pass from Venice to Lyons, swim down the Rhône, wheel round the south of France, and embark at Bourdeaux. Alas! at Lyons I received letters which convinced me that I ought no longer to deprive my country of one of her greatest ornaments. Unwillingly I obeyed, left Guise to execute alone the remainder of our plan, passed about ten delicious days in Paris, and arrived in England about the end of June. Guise followed me about two months afterwards, as I was informed by an epistle from him, which, to his great astonishment, I immediately answered. You perceive there is still some virtue amongst men. *Exempli gratiâ*, your letter is dated Vienna, October 12, 1765; it made its appearance at Beriton, Wednesday evening, October the 29th. I am, at this present writing, sitting in my library on Thursday morning between the hours of twelve and one. I have ventured to suppose you still at Berlin; if not, I presume you take care that your letters should follow you. This ideal march to Berlin is the only one I can make at present. I am under command, and were I to talk of a third sally as yet, I know some certain people who would think it just as ridiculous as the third sally of the renowned Don Quixote. All I ever hoped for was to be able to take the field once more, after lying quiet a couple of years. I must own that your executing your tour in so complete a manner gives me a little selfish . . . . If I make a summer's escape to Berlin I cannot hope for the companion I flattered myself with. I am sorry, however, I have said so much;

but as it is difficult to increase your honour's proper notions of your own perfections, I will e'en let it stand. Indeed, I owed you something for your account of the favourable reception my book has met with. I see there are people of taste at Vienna, and no longer wonder at your liking it. Since the Court is so agreeable, a thorough reformation must have taken place. The stiffness of the Austrian etiquette and the haughty magnificence of the Hungarian princes must have given way to more civilised notions. You have, no doubt, informed yourself of the forces and revenues of the Empress. I think, however unfashionably, we always esteemed her. Have you lost or improved that opinion? Princes, like pictures, to be admired, must be seen in their proper point of view, which is often a pretty distant one. I am afraid you will find it peculiarly so at Berlin.

I need not desire you to pay a most minute attention to the Austrian and Prussian discipline. You have been bit by a mad serjeant as well as myself, and when we meet we shall run over every particular which we can approve, blame, or imitate. Since my arrival I have assumed the august character of major, received returns, issued orders, &c. &c. &c. I do not intend you shall have the honour of reviewing my troops next summer. Three-fourths of the men will be recruits, and during my pilgrimage discipline seems to have been relaxed. But I summon you to fulfil another engagement. Make me a visit next summer. You will find here a bad house, a pleasant country in summer, some books, and very little strange company. Such a plan of life for two or three months must, I should imagine, suit a man who has been for as many years struck from one end of Europe to the other like a tennis-ball. At least I judge of you by myself. I always loved a quiet, studious, indolent life, but never enjoyed the charms of it so truly as since my return from an agreeable but fatiguing course of motion and hurry. However, I shall hear of your arrival, which can scarcely be so soon as January 1766, and shall probably have the misfortune of meeting you in town soon after. We may then settle any plans for the ensuing campaign.

En attendant (admire me: this is the only scrap of foreign lingo

I have imported into this epistle—if you had seen that of Guise to me!), let me tell you a piece of Lausanne news. Nanette Grand is married to Lieutenant-Colonel Prevôt. Grand wrote to me, and by next post I congratulated both father and daughter. There is exactness for you. The Curchod (Madame Necker) I saw at Paris. She was very fond of me, and the husband particularly civil. Could they insult me more cruelly? Ask me every evening to supper; go to bed, and leave me alone with his wife—what an impertinent security! It is making an old lover of mighty little consequence. She is as handsome as ever, and much genteeler; seems pleased with her fortune rather than proud of it. I was, perhaps indiscreetly enough, exalting Nanette d'Illens's good luck and the fortune. "What fortune?" said she with an air of contempt; "not above twenty thousand livres a year." I smiled, and she caught herself immediately. "What airs I give myself in despising twenty thousand livres a year, who a year ago looked upon eight hundred as the summit of my wishes!"

I must end this tedious scrawl. Let me hear from you; I think I deserve it. Believe me, dear Holroyd, I share in all your pleasures and feel all your misfortunes. Poor Bolton! I saw it in the newspaper. Is Ridley with you! I suspect not; but if he is, assure him I do not forget him though he does me. Adieu; and believe me, most affectionately yours,

E. GIBBON, Junior.

No. X.

The Same to the Same.

BERITON, *April* 29, 1767.

DEAR HOLROYD,—I happened to-night to stumble upon a very odd piece of intelligence in the *St. James's Chronicle*. It related to the marriage of a certain Monsieur Olroy,[1] formerly captain of hussars. I do not know how it came into my head that this captain of hussars was not unknown to me, and that he might possibly be an acquaintance of yours. If I am not mistaken in

[1] The name was so spelt in the newspapers.

my conjecture, pray give my compliments to him, and tell him from me that I am at least as well pleased that he is married as if I were so myself. Assure him, however, that though as a philosopher I may prefer celibacy, yet as a politician I think it highly proper that the species should be propagated by the usual method; assure him even that I am convinced that, if celibacy is exposed to fewer miseries, marriage can alone promise real happiness, since domestic enjoyments are the source of every other good. May such happiness, which is bestowed on few, be given to him—the transient blessings of beauty, and the more durable ones of fortune, good sense, and an amiable disposition.

I can easily conceive, and as easily excuse you, if you have thought mighty little this winter of your poor rusticated friend. I have been confined ever since Christmas, and confined by a succession of very melancholy occupations. I had scarcely arrived at Beriton, where I proposed staying only about a fortnight, when a brother of Mrs. Gibbon's died unexpectedly, though after a very long and painful illness. We were scarcely recovered from the confusion which such an event must produce in a family, when my father was taken dangerously ill, and with some intervals has continued so ever since. I can assure you, my dear Holroyd, that the same event appears in a very different light when the danger is serious and immediate, or when, in the gaiety of a tavern dinner, we affect an insensibility that would do us no great honour were it real. My father is now much better; but I have since been assailed by a severe stroke—the loss of a friend. You remember, perhaps, an officer of our militia whom I sometimes used to compare to yourself. Indeed, the comparison would have done honour to any one. His feelings were tender and noble, and he was always guided by them; his principles were just and generous, and he acted up to them. I shall say no more, and you will excuse my having said so much of a man with whom you were unacquainted; but my mind is just now so very full of him that I cannot easily talk or even think of anything else. If I know you right, you will not be offended at my weakness.

What rather adds to my uneasiness is the necessity I am under

of joining our militia the day after to-morrow. Though the lively hurry of such a scene might contribute to divert my ideas, yet every circumstance of it, and the place itself, which was that of his residence, will give me many a painful moment. I know nothing would better raise my spirits than a visit from you; the request may appear unseasonable, but I think I have heard you speak of an uncle you had near Southampton. At all events I hope you will snatch a moment to write to me, and give me some account of your present situation and future designs. As you are now fettered, I should expect you will not be such a *hic et ubique*[1] as you have been since your arrival in England. I stay at Southampton from the 1st to the 28th of May, and then propose making a short visit to town; if you are anywhere in the neighbourhood of it, you may depend upon seeing me. I shall then concert measures for seeing a little more of you next winter than I have lately done, as I hope to take a pretty long spell in town. I suppose Guise has often fallen in your way. He has never once written to me, nor I to him: in the country we want materials, and in London we want time. I ought to recollect that you even want time to read my unmeaning scrawl. Believe, however, my dear Holroyd, that it is the sincere expression of a heart entirely yours.

No. XI.

The Same to the Same.

BERITON, *October* 16, 1769.

DEAR HOLROYD,—I received your agreeable missive about two days ago, and am glad to find that, after all your errors, your are at last a settled man. I do most sincerely regret that it is not in my power to obey your immediate summons. Some very particular business will not at present permit me to be long absent from Beriton. The same business will carry me to town, about the 6th of next month, for some days. On my return I do really hope and intend to storm your castle before Christmas, as I presume you will hardly remove sooner. I should be glad

[1] The motto of the regiment called Royal Foresters, in which Mr. Holroyd had been captain.

to meet Cambridge; but the plain dish of friendship will satisfy me, without the seasoning of Attic wit. Do you know anything of Guise? Have you no inclination to look at the Russians? We have a bed at your service. Vale.

Present my sincere respects to those who are dear to you. Believe me, they are so to me.

No. XII.

The Same to the Same.

PALL MALL, *December* 25, 1769.

DEAR HOLROYD,—Some demon, the enemy of friendship, seems to have determined that we shall not meet at Sheffield Place. I was fully resolved to make amends for my lazy scruples, and to dine with you to-morrow, when I received a letter this day from my father which irresistibly draws me to Beriton for about ten days. The above-mentioned demon, though he may defer my projects, shall not, however, disappoint them. Since you intend to pass the winter in retirement, it will be a far greater compliment to quit active, gay, political London than the drowsy desert London of the holidays. But I retract. What is both pleasing and sincere is above that prostituted word compliment. —Believe me most sincerely yours.

Apropos, I forgot the compliments of the season, &c. &c.

No. XIII.

The Same to the Same.

October 6, 1771.

DEAR HOLROYD,—I sit down to answer your epistle, after taking a very pleasant ride. A ride! and upon what? Upon a horse. You lie! I don't. I have got a droll little pony, and intend to renew the long-forgotten practice of equitation as it was known in the world before the 2nd of June of the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and sixty-three. As I used to reason against riding, so I can now argue for it; and

indeed the principal use I know in human reason is, when called upon, to furnish arguments for what we have an inclination to do.

What do you mean by presuming to affirm that I am of no use here? Farmer Gibbon of no use! Last week I sold all my hops, and I believe well, at nine guineas a hundred, to a very responsible man. Some people think I might have got more at Weyhill Fair, but that would have been an additional expense, and a great uncertainty. Our quantity has disappointed us very much; but I think that, besides hops for the family, there will not be less than £500—no contemptible sum off thirteen small acres, and two of them planted last year only. This week I let a little farm in Petersfield by auction, and propose raising it from £25 to £35 per annum. And Farmer Gibbon of no use!

To be serious, I have but one reason for resisting your invitation, and my own wishes; that is, Mrs. Gibbon I left nearly alone all last winter, and shall do the same this. She submits very cheerfully to that state of solitude; but, on sounding her, I am convinced that she would think it unkind were I to leave her at present. I know you so well that I am sure you will acquiesce in this reason, and let me make my next visit to Sheffield Place from town, which I think may be a little before Christmas. I should like to hear something of the precise time, duration, and extent of your intended tour into Bucks. Adieu.

No. XIV.

The Same to the Same.

BERITON, *November* 18, 1771.

MOST RESPECTABLE SOUTH SAXON,—It would ill become me to reproach a dilatory correspondent—

"Quis tulerit Gracchos de seditione querentes?"

especially when that correspondent had given me hopes of undertaking a very troublesome expedition for my sole advantage. Yet thus much I may say, that I am obliged very soon to go to town upon other business, which, in that hope, I have hitherto deferred. If by next Sunday I have no answer, or if I hear that your journey

to Denham is put off *sine die*, or to a long day, I shall on Monday set off for London, and wait your future will with faith, hope, and charity. Adieu.

No. XV.

The Same to the Same.

LONDON, 1772.

DEAR HOLROYD,—The sudden change from the sobriety of Sheffield Place to the irregularities of this town, and to the wicked company of Wilbraham, Clarke, Damer, &c., having deranged me a good deal, I am forced to employ one of my secretaries to acquaint you with a piece of news I know nothing about myself. It is certain some extraordinary intelligence is arrived this morning from Denmark, and as certain that the levee was suddenly prevented by it. The particulars of that intelligence are variously and obscurely told. It is said that the King had raised a little physician to the rank of Minister and Ganymede; such a mad administration had so disgusted all the nobility, that the fleet and army had rose, and shut up the King in his palace. *La Reine se trouve mêlée la dedans;* and it is reported that she is confined, but whether in consequence of the insurrection, or some other cause, is not agreed. Such is the rough draft of an affair that nobody yet understands. *Embrassez de ma part Madame, et le reste de la chère famille.* GIBBON.

Et plus bas—WILBRAHAM, Sec.

No. XVI.

The Same to the Same.

BOODLE'S, *ten o'clock, Monday night, February* 3, 1772.

I love, honour, and respect every member of Sheffield Place; even my great enemy [1] Datch, to whom you will please to convey my sincere wishes that no simpleton may wait on him at dinner, that his wise papa may not show him any pictures, and that his much wiser mamma may chain him hand and foot, in direct contradiction to Magna Charta and the Bill of Rights.

[1] The name by which the child called himself.

It is difficult to write news, because there is none. Parliament is perfectly quiet; and I think that Barré, who is just now playing at whist in the room, will not have exercise of the lungs, except, perhaps, on a message much talked of, and soon expected, to recommend it to the wisdom of the House of Commons to provide a proper future remedy against the improper marriages of the younger branches of the Royal Family. The noise of —— is subsided, but there was some foundation for it. ——'s expenses in his bold enterprise were yet unpaid by Government. The hero threatened, assumed the patriot, received a sop, and again sank into the courtier. As to Denmark, it seems now that the King, who was totally unfit for government, has only passed from the hands of his Queen wife to those of his Queen mother-in-law. —— is said to have indulged a very vague taste in her amours. She would not be admitted into the Pantheon, whence the gentlemen proprietors exclude all beauty unless unspotted and immaculate (tautology by the bye). The gentlemen proprietors, on the other hand, are friends and patrons of the leopard beauties. Advertising challenges have passed between the two great factions, and a bloody battle is expected Wednesday night. *Apropos*, the Pantheon, in point of ennui and magnificence, is the wonder of the eighteenth century and of the British Empire. Adieu.

No. XVII.

The Same to the Same.

BOODLE'S, *Saturday night, February* 8, 1772.

Though it is very late, and the bell tells me that I have not above ten minutes left, I employ them with pleasure in congratulating you on the late victory of our dear mamma the Church of England. She had last Thursday seventy-one rebellious sons, who pretended to set aside her will on account of insanity; but two hundred and seventeen worthy champions, headed by Lord North, Burke, Hans Stanley, Charles Fox, Godfrey Clarke, &c., though they allowed the thirty-nine clauses of her testament were absurd and unreasonable, supported the

validity of it with infinite humour. By the bye, —— prepared himself for that holy war by passing twenty-two hours in the pious exercise of hazard; his devotions cost him about £500 per hour—in all, £11,000. —— lost £5000. This is from the best authority. I hear, too, but will not warrant it, that ——, by way of paying his court to ——, has lost this winter £12,000. How I long to be ruined!

There are two county contests—Sir Thomas Egerton and Colonel Townley in Lancashire, after the county had for some time gone a-begging. In Salop, Sir Watkin, supported by Lord Gower, happened by a punctilio to disoblige Lord Craven, who told us last night that he had not quite £9000 a year in that county, and who has set up Pigot against him. You may suppose we all wish for God Almighty against that black devil.

I am sorry your journey is deferred. Compliments to Datch. As he is now in durance, great minds forgive their enemies, and I hope he may be released by this time.——Coming, Sir. Adieu.

You see the Princess of W. is gone. Hans Stanley says it is believed the Empress Queen has taken the same journey.

No. XVIII.

The Same to the Same.

LONDON, *February* 13, 1772.

DEAR HOLROYD,—The papers and plans arrived safe in town last night, and will be in your hands in their intact virgin state in a day or two. Consider them at leisure, if that word is known in the rural life. Unite, divide, but above all raise. Bring them to London with you. I wait your orders; nor shall I, for fear of tumbling, take a single step till your arrival, which, on many accounts, I hope will not be long deferred.

Clouds still hover over the horizon of Denmark. The public circumstances of the revolution are related, and, I understand, very exactly, in the foreign papers. The secret springs of it still remain unknown. The town indeed seems at present quite tired of the subject. The Princess's death, her character, and what

she left engross the conversation. She died without a will, and as her savings were generally disposed of in charity, the small remains of her personal fortune will make a trifling object when divided among her children. Her favourite, the Princess of B, very properly insisted on the King's immediately sealing up all the papers, to secure her from the idle reports which would be so readily swallowed by the great English monster. The business of Lord and Lady —— is finally compromised by the arbitration of the Chancellor and Lord ——. He gives her £1200 a year separate maintenance, and £1500 to set out with; but as her ladyship is now a new face, her husband, who has already bestowed on the public seventy young beauties, has conceived a violent but hopeless passion for his chaste moiety.

. . . . . .

Lord Chesterfield is dying. County oppositions subside. Adieu. —Entirely yours.

No. XIX.

The Same to the Same.

February 21, 1772.

DEAR HOLROYD,— . . . . . .

However, notwithstanding my indignation, I will employ five minutes in telling you two or three recent pieces of news.

1. Charles Fox is commenced patriot, and is already attempting to pronounce the words country, liberty, corruption, &c.; with what success time will discover. Yesterday he resigned the Admiralty. The story is, that he could not prevail on the Ministry to join with him in his intended repeal of the Marriage Act, a favourite measure of his father, who opposed it from its origin, and that Charles very judiciously thought Lord Holland's friendship imported him more than Lord North's.

2. Yesterday the marriage message came to both Houses of Parliament. You will see the words of it in the papers; and, thanks to the submissive piety of this session, it is hoped that

. . . . . .

3. To-day the House of Commons was employed in a very odd way. Tommy Townshend moved that the sermon of Dr.

Knowell, who preached before the House on the 30th of January (*id est*, before the Speaker and four members), should be burnt by the common hangman, as containing arbitrary, Tory, high-flown doctrines. The House was nearly agreeing to the motion, till they recollected that they had already thanked the preacher for his excellent discourse, and ordered it to be printed. Knowell's bookseller is much obliged to the Right Honourable Tommy Townshend.

When do you come to town? I want money, and am tired of sticking to the earth by so many roots. *Embrassez de ma part*, &c. Adieu.—Ever yours.

No. XX.

EDWARD GIBBON, Esq., *to* Mrs. GIBBON, Beriton.

LONDON, *March* 21, 1772.

DEAR MADAM,—I have advanced with some care and some success in gaining an idea of the Lenborough estate. The tenants are at will, and, from a comparison of my rents with the neighbouring ones, particularly Lord ——, there is great probability that my estate is very much under-let. My friend Holroyd, who is a most invaluable counsellor, is strongly of that opinion. Sir —— is just come home. I am sorry to see many alterations and little improvement. From an honest, wild English buck, he is grown a philosopher. Lord —— displeases everybody by the affectation of consequence; the young baronet disgusts no less by the affectation of wisdom. He speaks in short sentences, quotes Montaigne, seldom smiles, never laughs, drinks only water, professes to command his passions, and intends to marry in five months. The two lords, his uncle, as well as ——, attempt to show him that such behaviour, even were it reasonable, does not suit this country. He remains incorrigible, and is every day losing ground in the good opinion of the public, which at his first arrival ran strongly in his favour. Deyverdun is probably on his journey towards England, but is not yet come. —I am, dear Madam, &c. &c. &c.

No. XXI.

EDWARD GIBBON, Esq., *to* J. B. HOLROYD, Esq.

PALL MALL, *May* 26, 1772.

DEAR HOLROYD,—I wish you lived nearer, or even that you could pass a week at Beriton. When shall you be at Richmond, or would there be any use in my going down to Sheffield for a day or two? In you alone I put my trust, and without you I should be perplexed, discouraged, and frightened; for not a single fish has yet bit at the Lenborough bait.

I dined the other day with Mr. Way at Boodle's. He told me that he was just going down to Sheffield Place. As he has probably unladen all the politics, and Mrs. Way all the scandal, of the town, I shall for the present only satisfy myself with the needful; among which I shall always reckon my sincere compliments to Madam and my profound respects for Mr. Datch.—I am, dear H., truly yours.

It is confidently asserted that the Emperor and King of Prussia are to run for very deep stakes over the Polish course. If the news be true, I back Austria against the aged horse, provided little Laudohn rides the match.

N.B.—Crossing and jostling allowed.

No. XXII.

EDWARD GIBBON, Esq., *to* Mrs. HOLROYD, Senior.

BERITON, NEAR PETERSFIELD, HAMPSHIRE,
July 17, 1772.

MADAM,—There is not any event which could have affected me with greater surprise and deeper concern than the news in last night's paper of the death of our poor little amiable friend, Master Holroyd, whom I loved not only for his parents' sake, but for his own. Should the news be true (for even yet I indulge

some faint hopes), what must be the distress of our friends at Sheffield! I so truly sympathise with them, that I know not how to write to Holroyd, but must beg to be informed of the state of the family by a line from you. I have some company and business here, but would gladly quit them if I had the least reason to think that my presence at Sheffield would afford comfort or satisfaction to the man in the world whom I love and esteem most.—I am, Madam, your most obedient, humble Servant, &c.

No. XXIII.

EDWARD GIBBON, Esq., *to* J. B. HOLROYD, Esq.

BERITON, *July* 30, 1772.

MY DEAR HOLROYD,—It was my intention to set out for Sheffield as soon as I received your affecting letter, and I hoped to have been with you as to-day; but walking very carelessly yesterday morning, I fell down, and put out a small bone in my ankle. I am now under the surgeon's hands, but think, and most earnestly hope, that this little accident will not delay my journey longer than the middle of next week. I share, and wish I could alleviate, your feelings. I beg to be remembered to Mrs. Holroyd.—I am, my dear Holroyd, most truly yours.

No. XXIV.

EDWARD GIBBON, Esq., *to* Mrs. GIBBON, Beriton.

SHEFFIELD PLACE, *August* 7, 1772.

DEAR MADAM,—I set out at six yesterday morning from Uppark, and got to Brighthelmstone about two. A very thin season; everybody gone to Spa. In the evening I reached this place. My friend appears, as he ever will, in a light truly respectable, concealing the most exquisite sufferings under the show of composure, and even cheerfulness, and attempting, though with little success, to confirm the weaker mind of his

partner. I find my friend expresses so much uneasiness at the idea of my leaving him again soon, that I cannot refuse to pass the month here. If Mr. Scott, as I suppose, is at Beriton, he has himself too high a sense of friendship not to excuse my neglecting him. I had some hopes of engaging Mr. and Mrs. Holroyd to make an excursion to Portsmouth, Isle of Wight, Southampton, &c., in which case they would spend a few days at Beriton. A sudden resolution was taken last night in favour of the tour. We set out, Mr. and Mrs. Holroyd, Mr. Fauquier, and myself, next Thursday, and shall dine at Beriton the following day, and stay there, most probably, three or four days. A farmhouse, without either cook or housekeeper, will afford but indifferent entertainment; but we must exert, and they must excuse. Our tour will last about a fortnight; after which my friend presses me to return with him, and in his present situation I shall be at a loss how to refuse him.—I am, dear Madam, &c. &c. &c.

No. XXV.

Dr. HURD (now Bishop of Worcester) *to* Mr. GIBBON.

THURCASTON, *August* 29, 1772.

SIR,—Your very elegant letter on the antiquity and authenticity of the Book of Daniel (just now received) finds me here, if not without leisure, yet without books, and therefore in no condition to enter far into the depths of this controversy, which indeed is the less necessary as everything that relates to the subject will come, of course, to be considered by my learned successors in the new lecture. For, as the prophecies of Daniel make an important link in that chain which, as you say, has been let down from heaven to earth (but not by the author of the late sermons, who brought into view only what he had not invented), the grounds on which their authority rests will, without doubt, be carefully examined, and, as I suppose, firmly established.

But in the meantime, and to make at least some small return

for the civility of your address to me, I beg leave to trouble you with two or three short remarks, such as occur to me on reading your letter.

Your main difficulties are these two: (1) that the author of the Book of Daniel is too clear for a prophet, as appears from his prediction of the Persian and Macedonian affairs; and (2) too fabulous for a contemporary historian, as is evident, you suppose, from his mistakes, particularly in the sixth chapter.

1. The first of these difficulties is an extraordinary one. For why may not prophecy, if the inspirer think fit, be as clear as history? Scriptural prophecy, whence your idea of its obscurity is taken, is occasionally thus clear—I mean after the event; and Daniel's prophecy of the revolutions in the Grecian Empire would have been obscure enough to Porphyry himself before it.

But your opinion, after all, when you come to explain yourself, really is, as one should expect, that, as a prophet, Daniel is not clear enough; for you enforce the old objection of Porphyry, by observing that where a pretended prophecy is clear to a certain point of time, and afterwards obscure and shadowy, there common-sense leads one to conclude that the author of it was an impostor.

This reasoning is plausible, but not conclusive, unless it be taken for granted that a prophecy must, in all its parts, be equally clear and precise; whereas, on the supposition of real inspiration, it may be fit, I mean it may suit with the views of the inspirer, to predict some things with more perspicuity, and in terms more obviously and directly applicable to the events in which they were fulfilled, than others. But, further, this reasoning, whatever force it may have, has no place here; at least you evidently beg the question when you urge it, because the persons you dispute against maintain that the subsequent prophecies of Daniel are equally distinct with those preceding ones concerning the Persian and Macedonian Empires—at least so much of them as they take to have been fulfilled; and that, to judge of the rest, we must wait for the conclusion of them.

However, you admit that the suspicion arising from the clearest prophecy may be removed by direct positive evidence that it was

composed before the event. But then you carry your notions of that evidence very far when you require "that the existence of such a prophecy prior to its accomplishment should be proved by the knowledge of its being generally diffused amongst an enlightened nation previous to that period, and its public existence attested by an unbroken chain of authentic writers."

What you here claim as a matter of right is, without question, very desirable, but should, I think, be accepted, if it be given at all, as a matter of favour. For what you describe is the utmost evidence that the case admits; but what right have we in this, or any other subject whatever of natural or revealed religion, to the utmost evidence? Is it not enough that the evidence be sufficient to induce a reasonable assent? And is not that assent reasonable which is given to real evidence, though of an inferior kind, when uncontrolled by any greater? And such evidence we clearly have for the authenticity of the Book of Daniel in the reception of it by the Jewish nation down to the time of Jesus, whose appeal to it supposes and implies that reception to have been constant and general: not to observe that the testimony of Jesus is further supported by all the considerations that are alleged for His own divine character. To this evidence, which is positive so far as it goes, you have nothing to oppose but surmise and conjectures; that is, nothing that deserves to be called evidence. But I doubt, Sir, you take for granted that the claim of inspiration is never to be allowed so long as there is a possibility of supposing that it was not given.

2. In the second division of your letter, which is longer and more elaborate than the first, you endeavour to show that the historical part of the Book of Daniel, chiefly that of the sixth chapter, is false and fabulous, and, as such, confutes and overthrows the prophetical. What you advance on this head is contained under five articles:—

(1.) You think it strange that Daniel, or any other man, should be promoted to a secret office of State for his skill in divination.

But here, first, you forget that Joseph was thus promoted for the same reason. Or, if you object to this instance, what should

hinder the promotion either of Joseph or Daniel, when their skill in divination had once brought them to the notice and favour of their sovereign, for what you call mere human accomplishments? For such, assuredly, both these great men possessed, if we may believe the plain part of their story, which asserts of Joseph, and indeed proves, that he was in no common degree discreet and wise; and of Daniel, that an excellent spirit was found in him; nay, that he had knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom over and above his understanding in all visions and dreams. In short, Sir, though princes of old might not make it a rule to choose their Ministers out of their soothsayers, yet neither would their being soothsayers, if they were otherwise well accomplished, prevent them from being Ministers. Just as in modern times, though Churchmen have not often, I will suppose, been made officers of State, even by bigoted princes, because they were Churchmen, yet neither have they been always excluded from serving in those stations when they have been found eminently qualified for them.

(2.) Your next exception is, that a combination could scarce have been formed in the Court of Babylon against the favourite Minister, though such factions are common in other Courts, because the courtiers of Darius must have apprehended that the piety of Daniel would be asserted by a miraculous interposition, of which they had seen a recent instance. And here, Sir, you expatiate with a little too much complacency on the strange indifference which the ancient world showed to the gift of miracles. You do not, I dare say, expect a serious answer to this charge; or if you do, it may be enough to observe, what I am sure your own reading and experience must have rendered very familiar to you, that the strongest belief, or conviction of the mind, perpetually gives way to the inflamed selfish passions; and that, when men have any scheme of interest or revenge much at heart, they are not restrained from pursuing it though the scaffold and the axe stand before them in full view, and have perhaps been streaming but the day before with the blood of other State criminals. I ask not whether miracles have ever actually existed, but whether you do not think that multitudes have been firmly persuaded of their

existence; and yet their indifference about them is a fact which I readily concede to you.

(3.) Your third criticism is directed against what is said of the law of the Medes and Persians, that it altereth not; where I find nothing to admire, but the extreme rigour of Asiatic despotism. For I consider this irrevocability of the law, when once promulgated by the sovereign, not as contrived to be a check on his will, but rather to show the irresistible and fatal course of it. And this idea was so much cherished by the despots of Persia, that, rather than revoke the iniquitous law, obtained by surprise, for exterminating the Jews, Ahasuerus took the part, as we read in the Book of Esther, and as Baron Montesquieu, I remember, observes, to permit the Jews to defend themselves against the execution of it; whence we see how consistent this law is with the determination of the judges, quoted by you from Herodotus, "that it was lawful for the king to do whatever he pleased;" for we understand that he did not please that this law, when once declared by him, should be altered.

You add under this head, "May I not assert that the Greek writers, who have so copiously treated of the affairs of Persia, have not left us the smallest vestige of a restraint, equally injurious to the monarch and prejudicial to the people?" I have not the Greek writers by me to consult, but a common book I chance to have at hand refers me to one such vestige, in a very eminent Greek historian, Diodorus Siculus (Lowth's *Comment. in loc.*).

(4.) A fourth objection to the historic truth of the Book of Daniel is taken, with more plausibility, from the matter of this law, which, as you truly observe, was very strange for the king's counsellor to advise, and for any despot whatever to enact.

But (*a.*) I a little question whether prayer was so constant and considerable a part of pagan worship as is supposed; and if it was not, the prejudices of the people would not be so much shocked by this interdict as we are ready to think. Daniel, indeed, prayed three times a day; but the idolaters might content themselves with praying now and then at a stated solemnity. It is clear that when you speak of depriving men of the comforts, and priests of

the profits, of religion, you have Christian, and even modern principles and manners in your eye. Perhaps in the comforts you represented to yourself a company of poor inflamed Huguenots under persecution; and in the profits, the lucrative trade of Popish masses. But be this as it may, it should be considered (*b*) that this law could not, in the nature of the thing, suppress all prayer, if the people had any great propensity to it. It could not suppress mental prayer; it could not even suppress bodily worship if performed, as it easily might be, in the night or in secret. Daniel, it was well known, was used to pray in open daylight, and in a place exposed to inspection, from his usual manner of praying; which manner, it was easily concluded, so zealous a votary as he was would not change or discontinue on account of the edict. Lastly, though the edict passed for thirty days, to make sure work, yet there was no doubt but the end proposed would be soon accomplished, and then it was not likely that much care would be taken about the observance of it.

All this put together, I can very well conceive that extreme envy and malice in the courtiers might suggest the idea of such a law, and that an impotent despot might be flattered by it. Certainly, if what we read in the third chapter be admitted, that one of these despots required all people, nations, and languages to worship his image on pain of death, there is no great wonder that another of them should demand the exclusive worship of himself for a month; nay, perhaps, he might think himself civil and even bounteous to his gods when he left them a share of the other eleven. For, as to the presumption—

> "Nihil est quod credere de se
> Non possit, cum laudatur diis æqua potestas."

(5.) A fifth, and what you seem to think the strongest, objection to the credit of the Book of Daniel is, that "no such person as Darius the Mede is to be found in the succession of the Babylonish princes" (you mean as given in Ptolemy's canon and the Greek writers) "between the time of Nebuchadnezzar and that of Cyrus." In saying this you do not forget or disown what our

ablest chronologers have said on the subject; but then you object that Xenophon's Cyaxares, to serve a turn, has been made to personate Darius the Mede, and yet that Xenophon's book, whether it be a romance or a true history, overturns the use which they have made of this hypothesis.

I permit myself, perhaps, to be too much flattered by your civility in referring me to my own taste rather than to the authority of Cicero; but the truth is, I am much disposed to agree with you, that, "if we unravel with any care the fine texture of the Cyropædia, we shall discover in every thread the Spartan discipline and the philosophy of Socrates." But then, as the judicious author choose to make so recent a story as that of Cyrus, and one so well known, the vehicle of his political and moral instructions, he would be sure to keep up to the truth of the story as far as might be, especially in the leading facts and in the principal persons, as we may say, of the drama. This obvious rule of decorum such a writer as Xenophon could not fail to observe; and therefore, on the supposition that his Cyropædia is a romance, I should conclude certainly that the outline of it was genuine history. But—

(*b.*) If it be so, you conclude that there is no ground for [illegible] that Darius the Mede ever reigned at Babylon, because [illegible] himself never reigned there.

Now, on the idea of Xenophon's book being a [illegible] might be good reason for the author's taking [illegible] short reign of Cyaxares, which would break [illegible] and divert the reader's attention too much from [illegible]; while yet the omission could hardly seem [illegible], since the lustre of his hero's fame, and [illegible] of question, he reserved to himself, [illegible] look Cyaxares. But, as to the fact, it [illegible] that Cyrus should concede to [illegible] father-in-law—for he was [illegible] sovereignty; or that he should [illegible] or, at least, that he should [illegible] in his hands at Babylon, while he himself [illegible]

other conquests at a distance. Any of these things is supposable enough, and I would rather admit any of them than reject the express, the repeated, the circumstantial, testimony of a not confessedly fabulous historian.

After all, Sir, I should forfeit, I know, your good opinion if I did not acknowledge that some, at least, of these circumstances are such as one should not, perhaps, expect at first sight. But, then, such is the condition of things here; and what is true in human life is not always, I had almost said not often, that which was previously to be expected; whence an ordinary romance is, they say, more probable than the best history.

But should any or all of these circumstances convince you perfectly that some degree of error or fiction is to be found in the Book of Daniel, it would be too precipitate to conclude that therefore the whole book was of no authority; for, at most, you could but infer that the historical part in which those circumstances are observed, namely, the sixth chapter, is not genuine; just, as you know, has been judged of some other historical tracts which had formerly been inserted in the Book of Daniel. For it is not with these collections which go under the names of the Prophets, as with some regularly connected system, where a charge of falsehood, if made good against one part, shakes the credit of the whole. Fictitious histories may have been joined to true prophecies, when all that bore the name of the same person, or any way related to him, came to be put together in the same volume; but the detection of such misalliance could not affect the prophecies—certainly not those of Daniel, which respect the later times; for these have an intrinsic evidence in themselves, and assert their own authenticity in proportion as we see or have reason to admit the accomplishment of them.

And now, Sir, I have only to commit these hasty reflections to your candour, a virtue which cannot be separated from the love of truth, and of which I observe many traces in your agreeable letter; and if you should indulge this quality still further, so as to conceive the possibility of that being true and reasonable in matters of religion which may seem strange or, to so lively a

fancy as yours, even ridiculous, you would not hurt the credit of your excellent understanding, and would thus remove one, perhaps a principal, occasion of those mists which, as you complain, hang over these nice and difficult subjects.—I am, with true respect, Sir, yours, &c. (Signed) R. H.

The following fragment was found with the foregoing letter, in Mr. GIBBON'S *handwriting:*—

Your answers to my five objections against the sixth chapter of Daniel come next to be considered.

1. With regard to Daniel's promotion, I consent to withdraw my opposition, and to allow the cases of Ximenes, Wolsey, and Richelieu as parallel instances; though there is surely some difference between a young foreign soothsayer being suddenly rewarded, for the interpretation of a dream, with the government of Babylon and a priest of the Established Church rising gradually to the great offices of State.

2. You apprehend, Sir, that my second objection scarcely deserves a serious answer; and that it is quite sufficient to appeal to my own reading and experience whether the strongest conviction of the mind does not perpetually give way to the inflamed and selfish passions. Since you appeal to me, I shall fairly lay before you the result of my observations on that subject. (1.) It must be confessed that the drunkard often sinks into the grave and the prodigal into a jail without a possibility of deceiving or of checking themselves. But they sink by slow degrees, and whilst they indulge the ruling passion, attend only to the trifling moment of each guinea, or of each bottle, without calculating their accumulated weight, till they feel themselves irretrievably crushed under it. (2.) In most of the hazardous enterprizes of life there is a mixture of chance and good fortune; what is called good fortune is often the effect of skill; and as our vanity flatters us into an opinion of our superior merit, we are neither surprised nor dismayed by the miscarriage of our rash predecessors. The conspirator turns his eyes from the axe and scaffold, perhaps still

streaming with blood, to the successful boldness of Sylla, of Cæsar, and of Cromwell, and convinces himself that on such a golden pursuit it is even prudent to stake a precarious and insipid life. We may add that the most daring flights of ambition are as often the effects of necessity as of choice. The princes of Hindostan must either reign or perish; and when Cæsar passed the Rubicon, it was scarcely possible for him to return to a private station. (3.) You think, Sir, we may learn from our own experience that an indifference concerning miracles is very compatible with a full conviction of their truth; and so it undoubtedly is with such a conviction as we have an opportunity of observing.

No. XXVI.

E. GIBBON, Esq., *to* J. B. HOLROYD, Esq.

BERITON, *October* 13, 1772.

DEAR HOLROYD,—I am just arrived, as well as yourself, at my *dii penates*, but with very different intention. You will ever remain a bigot to those rustic deities; I propose to abjure them soon, and to reconcile myself to the catholic church of London.

I am so happy, so exquisitely happy, at feeling so many mountains taken off my shoulders that I can brave your indignation, and even the three-forked lightning of Jupiter himself. My reasons for taking so unwarrantable a step, approved of by Hugonin, were no unmanly despondency, though it daily became more apparent how much the farm would suffer, both in reality and in reputation, by another year's management. . . . . I see pleasure but not use in a congress, therefore decline it. I know nothing as yet of a purchaser, and can only give you full and unlimited powers. If you think it necessary, let me know when you sell; but, however, do as you please.

I am sincerely glad to hear Mrs. H. is better. Still think Bath would suit her. She, and you too, I fear, rather want the physic of the mind than of the body. Tell me something about yourself. If, among a crowd of acquaintances, one friend can afford you any comfort, I am quite at your service. Once more, adieu.

No. XXVII.

The Same to the Same.

PALL MALL, *December* 11, 1772.

DEAR HOLROYD,—By this time I suppose you returned to the Elysian fields of Sheffield. The country (I do not mean any particular reflections on Sussex) must be vastly pleasant at this time of the year! For my own part, the punishment of my sins has at length overtaken me. On Thursday the 3rd of December, in the present year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and seventy-two, between the hours of one and two in the afternoon, as I was crossing St. James's Churchyard, I stumbled and again sprained my foot; but, alas! after two days' pain and confinement, a horrid monster, yclept the gout, made me a short visit; and though he has now taken his leave, I am full of apprehensions that he may have liked my company well enough to call again.

The Parliament, after a few soft murmurs, is gone to sleep, to awake again after Christmas, safely folded in Lord North's arms. The town is gone into the country, and I propose visiting Sheffield about Sunday se'nnight, if by that time I can get my household preparations (I have as good as taken Lady Rous's lease in Bentinck Street) in any forwardness. ' Shall I angle for Batt? No news stirring, except the Duchess of G.'s pregnancy certainly declared. —— called on me the other day, and has taken my plan with him to consider it; he still wishes to defer to spring; talks of bad roads, &c., and is very absolute. I remonstrated, but want to know whether I am to submit. Adieu. Godfrey Clarke, who is writing near me, begs to be remembered. The savage is going to hunt foxes in Northamptonshire, Oxfordshire, Gloucestershire, &c.—Yours sincerely.

No. XXVIII.

The Same to the Same.

BOODLE'S, *ten o'clock, Thursday evening, Dec.* 1772.

DEAR HOLROYD,—My schemes with regard to you have been entirely disappointed. The business that called me to town was not ready before the 20th of last month, and the same business has kept me here till now. I have, however, a very strong inclination to eat a Christmas mince-pie with you, and let me tell you that inclination is no small compliment. What are the trees and waters of Sheffield Place compared with the comfortable smoke, lazy dinners, and inflammatory Junius's, which we can every day enjoy in town? You have seen the last Junius? He calls to the distant legions to march to the Capitol and free us from the tyranny of the Prætorian Guards. I cannot answer for the ghost of the *hic et ubique*, but the Hampshire militia are determined to keep the peace for fear of a broken head. After all, do I mean to make you a visit next week? Upon my soul, I cannot tell. I tell everybody that I shall. I know that I cannot pass the week with any man in the world with whom the pleasure of seeing each other will be more sincere or more reciprocal. Yet, *entre nous*, I do not believe that I shall be able to get out of this town before you come into it. At all events, I look forward with great impatience to Bruton Street[1] and the Romans.[2]—Believe me most truly yours.

No. XXIX.

The Same to the Same.

January 12, 1773.

DEAR HOLROYD,—Lenborough is no more! —— acted like a Jew, and I dare say now repents it. In his room —— found me a better man, a rich, brutish, honest horse-dealer, who has got a great fortune by serving the cavalry. On Thursday he saw

[1] Where Mr. Holroyd's family passed a winter. [2] The Roman Club.

Lenborough, on Friday came to town with ——, and this morning at nine o'clock we struck at £20,000, after a very hard battle. As times go, I am not dissatisfied. —— and the new Lord of Lenborough (by name ——) dined with me; and though we did not speak the same language, yet by the help of signs, such as that of putting about the bottle, the natives seemed well satisfied.

The whole world is going down to Portsmouth, where they will enjoy the pleasures of smoke, noise, heat, bad lodgings, and expensive reckonings. For my own part, I have firmly resisted importunity, declined parties, and mean to pass the busy week in the soft retirement of my *bocage de* Bentinck Street. Yesterday the East India Company positively refused the loan—a noble resolution, could they get money anywhere else. They are violent; and it was moved, and the motion heard with some degree of approbation, that they should instantly abandon India to Lord North, Sujah Dowlah, or the devil, if he chose to take it. Adieu.

No. XXX.

The Same to the Same.

BOODLE'S, *May* 11, 1773.

DEAR HOLROYD,—I am full of worldly cares, anxious about the great twenty-fourth, plagued with the *Public Advertiser*, distressed by the most dismal despatches from Hugonin. Mrs. Lee claims a million of repairs, which will cost a million of money.

The House of Commons sat late last night. Burgoyne made some spirited motions—"That the territorial acquisitions in India belonged to the State (that was the word); that grants to the servants of the Company (such as *jaghires*) were illegal; and that there would be no true repentance without restitution." Wedderburne defended the nabobs with great eloquence but little argument. The motions were carried without a division; and the hounds go out again next Friday. They are in high spirits, but the more sagacious ones have no idea they shall kill. Lord North spoke for the inquiry, but faintly and reluctantly. Lady —— is

said to be in town at her mother's, and a separation is unavoidable; but there is nothing certain. Adieu.—Sincerely yours.

No. XXXI.

The Same to the Same, at Edinburgh.

Berwick Street, *August* 7, 1773.

Dear Horatio.—I beg ten thousand pardons for not being dead, as I certainly ought to be. But such is my abject nature, that I had rather live in Berwick Street, attainted and convicted of the sin of laziness, than enjoy your applause either at Old Nick's or even in the Elysian fields. After all, could you expect that I should honour with my correspondence a wild barbarian of the bogs of Erin? Had the natives intercepted my letter, the terrors occasioned by such unknown magic characters might have been fatal to you. But now you have escaped the fury of their hospitality, and are arrived among a civilized nation, I may venture to renew my intercourse.

You tell me of a long list of dukes, lords, and chieftains of renown to whom you are introduced; were I with you, I should prefer one David to them all. When you are at Edinburgh, I hope you will not fail to visit the stye of that disciple of Epicurus's hogs, and inform yourself whether there remains no hope of its recovering the use of its right paw. There is another animal of great though not perhaps of equal, and certainly not of similar merit, one Robertson: has he almost created the new world? Many other men you have undoubtedly seen in the country where you are at present who must have commanded your esteem: but when you return, if you are not very honest, you will possess great advantages over me in any dispute concerning Caledonian merit.

Beattie's and Atwood's are now no more. The last stragglers, and Godfrey Clarke in the rear of all, are moved away to their several castles, and I now enjoy in the midst of London a delicious solitude. My library, Kensington Gardens, and a few parties

with new acquaintance who are chained to London, among whom I reckon Goldsmith and Sir Joshua Reynolds, fill up my time, and the monster Ennui preserves a very respectable distance. By the bye, your friends Batt, Sir John Russell, and Lascelles dined with me one day before they set off; for I sometimes give the prettiest little dinner in the world. But all this composure draws near its conclusion. About the 16th of this month Mr. Eliot carries me away, and after picking up Mrs. Gibbon at Bath, sets me down at Port Eliot. There I shall certainly remain six weeks, or, in other words, to the end of September. My future motions, whether to London, Derbyshire, or a longer stay in Cornwall (pray, is not "motion to stay" rather in the Hibernian style?), will depend on the life of Port Eliot, the time of the meeting of Parliament, and perhaps the impatience of Mr. ——, lord of Lenborough. One of my pleasures in town I forgot to mention, the unexpected visit of Deyverdun, who accompanies his young lord (very young indeed!) on a two months' tour to England. He took the opportunity of the Earl's going down to the Duke of —— to spend a fortnight (nor do I recollect a more pleasant one) in Bentinck Street. They are now gone together into Yorkshire, and I think it doubtful whether I shall see him again before his return to Leipsic. It is a melancholy reflection that, while one is plagued with acquaintance at the corner of every street, real friends should be separated from each other by unsurmountable bars, and obliged to catch at a few transient moments of interview. I desire that you and my lady, whom I most respectfully greet, would take your share of that very new and acute observation; not as large a share, indeed, as my Swiss friend, since nature and fortune give us more frequent opportunities of being together. You cannot expect news from a desert, and such is London at present. The papers give you the full harvest of public intelligence, and I imagine that the eloquent nymphs of Twickenham[1] communicate all the most actions of the polite, the amorous, and the [illegible] world. The great pantomime of Portsmouth was universally admired, and I am angry at my own laziness in neglecting an excellent opportunity of

[1] Misses Cambridge.

seeing it. Foote has given us The Bankrupt, a serious and sentimental piece, with very severe strictures on the license of scandal in attacking private characters. Adieu. Forgive and epistolise me. I shall not believe you sincere in the former unless you make Bentinck Street your inn. I fear I shall be gone, but Mrs. Ford [1] and the parrot will be proud to receive you and my lady after your long peregrination, from which I expect great improvements. Has she got the brogue upon the tip of her tongue? [2]

No. XXXII.

The Same to the Same.

PORT ELIOT, *September* 10, 1773

DEAR HOLROYD,—By this time you have surely finished your tour, touched at Edinburgh, where you found a letter, which you have not answered, and are now contemplating the beauties of the Weald of Sussex. I shall demand a long and particular account of your peregrinations, but will excuse it till we meet, and for the present expect only a short memorandum of your health and situation, together with that of my much-honoured friend, Mrs. Abigail Holroyd. A word, too, if you please, concerning father and sister. To the latter I enclose a receipt from Mrs. G., who is now with me at Port Eliot.

Blind as you accuse me of being to the beauties of nature, I am wonderfully pleased with this country. Of her three dull notes, ground, plants, and water, Cornwall possesses the first and last in very high perfection. Think of a hundred solitary streams peacefully gliding between amazing cliffs on one side and rich meadows on the other, gradually swelling by the aid of the tide into noble rivers, successively losing themselves in each other, and all at length terminating in the harbour of Plymouth, whose broad expanse is irregularly dotted with two-and-forty line-of-battle ships. In plants indeed we are deficient; and though all the gentlemen now attend

[1] His housekeeper.

[2] Mr. and Mrs. Holroyd made a tour to Ireland and Scotland this summer.

to posterity, the country will for a long time be very naked. We have spent several days agreeably enough in little parties, but in general our time rolls away in complete uniformity. Our landlord possesses neither a pack of hounds, nor a stable of running horses, nor a large farm, nor a good library. The last only could interest me; but it is singular that a man of fortune, who chooses to pass nine months of the year in the country, should have none of them.

According to our present design, Mrs. G. and myself return to Bath about the beginning of next month. I shall probably make but a short stay with her, and defer my Derbyshire journey till another year. Sufficient for the summer is the evil thereof, viz., one distant country excursion. Natural inclination, the prosecution of my great work, and the conclusion of my Lenborough business plead strongly in favour of London. However, I desire—and one always finds time for what one really desires—to visit Sheffield Place before the end of October, should it only be for a few days. I know several houses where I am invited to think myself at home, but I know no other where I seem inclined to accept of the invitation. I forgot to tell you that I have declined the publication of Lord Chesterfield's Letters. The public will see them, and upon the whole, I think, with pleasure; but the family were strongly bent against it, and, especially on Deyverdun's account, I deemed it more prudent to avoid making them my personal enemies.

No. XXXIII.

The Same to the Same.

January 1774.

I have a letter from Hugonin—a dreadful one, I believe, but it has lain four days unperused in my drawer. Let me turn it over to you.

Foster is playing at what he calls whist, his partner swearing inwardly. He would write to you to-night, but he thinks he had rather write next post. He will think so a good while. Everything public still as death. Our Committee of the Catch Club

has done more business this morning than all those of the House of Commons since their meeting. Roberts does not petition. This from the best authority, and yet perhaps totally false. Hare married to Sir Abraham Hume's daughter. You see how hard pressed I am for news. Besides, at any time, I had rather talk an hour than write a page. Therefore adieu. I am glad to hear of your speedy removal. Remember Bentinck Street.

No. XXXIV.

The Same to the Same.

January 29, 1774.

I am now getting acquainted with authors, managers, &c.—good company to know, but not to live with. Yesterday I dined at the British Coffee-House with Garrick, Colman, Goldsmith, Macpherson, John Hume, &c. I am this moment come from Colman's Man of Business. We dined at the Shakespeare, and went in a body to support it. Between friends, though we got a verdict for our client, his cause was but a bad one. It is a very confused miscellany of several plays and tales, sets out brilliantly enough, but as we advance the plot grows thicker, the wit thinner, till the lucky fall of the curtain preserves us from total chaos.

Bentinck Street has visited Welbeck Street. Sappho is very happy that she is there yet: on Sheffield Place she squints with regret and gratitude. Mamma consulted me about buying coals; we cannot get any round ones. Quintus is gone to head the civil war. Of Mrs. —— I have nothing to say. I have got my intelligence for insuring, and will immediately get the preservative against fire. Foster has sent me eight-and-twenty pair of Paris silk stockings, with an intimation that my lady wished for half a dozen. They are much at her service; but if she will look into David Hume's Essay on National Characters, she will see that I durst not offer them to a Queen of Spain. *Sache qu'une reine d'Espagne n'a point de jambes.* Adieu.

No. XXXV.

The Same to the Same.

1774.

We have conquered. —— was amazed at the tempest just ready to break over his head. He does not desire to go to law, wishes to live in peace, has no complaints to make, hopes for a little indulgence. Hugonin is now in the attitude of St. Michael trampling upon Satan; he holds him down till Andrews has prepared a little chain of adamant to bind the foul fiend. In return, receive my congratulation on your Irish victory. Batt told me yesterday, as from good authority, that the Administration designed a second attempt this session; but to-day I have it from much better, that they always discouraged it, and that it was totally an Hibernian scheme. You remark that I saw Batt. He passed two hours with me; a pleasant man! He and Sir John Russell dine with me next week. You will have both their portraits; the originals are engaged.

No. XXXVI.

The Same to the Same.

February 1774.

Did you get down safe and early? Is my lady in good spirits and humour? You do not deserve that she should, for hurrying her away. Does Maria coquet with Divedown?[1] Adieu. Bentinck Street looks very dismal. You may suppose that nothing very important can have occurred since you left town; but I will send you some account of America after Monday, though, indeed, my anxiety about an old manor takes away much of my attention from a new continent. The mildness of Godfrey Clarke is roused into military fury; but he is an old Tory, and you only suppose yourself an old Whig. I alone am a true Englishman, philosopher, and Whig.

[1] Dr. Downes.

No. XXXVII.

The Same to the Same.

BOODLES, *Wednesday evening, March* 16, 1774.

I was this morning with ——. He was positive that the attempt to settle the preliminaries of arbitration by letters would lead us on to the middle of the summer, and that a meeting was the only practicable measure. I acquiesced, and we blended his epistle and yours into one, which goes by this post. If you can contrive to suit to it your Oxford journey, your presence at the meeting would be received as the descent of a guardian angel.

Very little that is satisfactory has transpired of America. On Monday Lord North moved for leave to bring in a Bill to remove the customs and courts of justice from Boston to New Salem—a step so detrimental to the former town as must soon reduce it to your own terms; and yet of so mild an appearance, that it was agreed to without a division, and almost without a debate. Something more is, however, intended, and a committee is appointed to inquire into the general state of America. But the Administration keep their secret as well as that of Freemasonry, and, as Coxe profanely suggests, for the same reason.

Don't you remember that in our Pantheon walks we admired the modest beauty of Mrs. ——? *Eh bien*, alas! she is . . . You ask me with whom? With ——, of the Guards, both the ——'s, ——, a steward of ——'s, her first love, and half the town besides. A meeting of ——'s friends assembled about a week ago to consult of the best method of acquainting him with his frontal honours. Edmund Burke was named as the orator, and communicated the transaction in a most eloquent speech.

N.B.—The same lady, who at public dinners appeared to have the most delicate appetite, was accustomed in her own apartment to feast on pork-steaks and sausages, and to swill porter till she was dead drunk. —— is abused by the —— family, has been bullied by ——, and can prove himself a Cornuto to the satisfaction of every one but a court of justice. O rare matrimony!

No. XXXVIII.

The Same to the Same.

March 29, 1774.

America.—Had I written Saturday night, as I once intended, fire and sword, oaths of allegiance and high treason tried in England, in consequence of the refusal, would have formed my letter. Lord North, however, opened a most lenient prescription last night; and the utmost attempt towards a new settlement seemed to be no more than investing the governors with a greater share of executive power, nomination of civil officers (judges, however, for life), and some regulations of juries. The Boston Port Bill passed the Lords last night; some lively conversation, but no division.

Bentinck Street.—Rose Fuller was against the Boston Port Bill, and against his niece's going to Boodle's masquerade. He was laughed at in the first instance, but succeeded in the second. Sappho and Fanny very indifferent, as mamma says, about going. They seem of a different opinion. Adieu.

No. XXXIX.

The Same to the Same.

April 2, 1774.

DEAR HOLROYD,—You owe me a letter; so this extra goes only to acquaint you with a misfortune that has just happened to poor Clarke, and which he really considers as such, the loss of a very excellent father. The blow was sudden; a thin, little man, as abstemious as a hermit, was destroyed by a stroke of apoplexy in his coach as he was going to dinner. He appeared perfectly well, and only two days before had very good-naturedly dined with us at a tavern, a thing he had not done for many years before. I am the only person Clarke wishes to see, except his own family, and I pass a great part of the day with him. A line from you would be kindly received.

Great news, you see, from India. Tanjour £400,000 to the Company; Suja Dowla £600,000. Adieu.

No. XL.

The Same to the Same.

April 13, 1774.

At length I am a little more at liberty. Godfrey Clarke went out of town this morning. Instead of going directly into Derbyshire, where he would have been overwhelmed with visits, &c., he had taken his sister, brother, and aunts to a villa near Farnham, in which he has the happiness of having no neighbourhood. If my esteem and friendship for Godfrey had been capable of any addition, it would have been very much increased by the manner in which he felt and lamented his father's death. He is now in very different circumstances than before; instead of an easy and ample allowance, he has taken possession of a great estate, with low rents and high encumbrances. I hope the one may make amends for the other. Under your conduct I am sure they would, and I have freely offered him your assistance, in case he should wish to apply for it.

In the meantime I must not forget my own affairs, which seem to be covered with inextricable perplexity. ——, as I mentioned about a century ago, promised to see —— and his attorney, and to oil the wheels of the arbitration. As yet I have not heard from him. I have some thoughts of writing myself to the jockey, stating the various steps of the affair, and offering him, with polite firmness, the immediate choice of Chancery or arbitration.

For the time, however, I forgot all these difficulties in the present enjoyment of Deyverdun's company; and I glory in thinking that, although my house is small, it is just of a sufficient size to hold my real friends, male and female. Among the latter my lady holds the very first place.

We are all quiet. American business is suspended and almost forgot. The other day we had a brisk report of a Spanish war. It was said they had taken one of our Leeward Islands. It since turns out that we are the invaders, but the invasion is trifling.

Bien obligé non (at present) for your invitation. I wish my

lady and you would come up to our masquerade the 3rd of May. The finest thing ever seen. We sup in a transparent temple that costs £450.

No. XLI.

The Same to the Same.

April 21, 1774.

DEAR HOLROYD,—I begin to flag, and though you already reproach me as a bad correspondent, I much fear that I shall every week become a more hardened sinner. Besides the occasional obstructions of Clarke and Deyverdun, I must entreat you to consider, with your usual candour, (1) the aversion to epistolary conversation which it has pleased the demon to implant in my nature; (2) that I am a very fine gentleman, a subscriber to the masquerade, where you and my lady ought to come, and am now writing at Boodle's, in a fine velvet coat, with ruffles of my lady's choosing, &c.; (3) that the aforesaid fine gentleman is likewise an historian; and in truth, when I am writing a page, I do not only think it a sufficient reason for delay, but even consider myself as writing for you, and that much more to the purpose than if I were sending you the tittle tattle of the town, of which, indeed, there is none stirring. With regard to America, the Minister seems moderate and the House obedient.

——'s last letter, by some unaccountable accident, had never reached me; so that yours, in every instance, amazed me. I immediately despatched to him groans and approbation. ——, however, gives me very very little uneasiness. I see that he is a bully, and that I have a stick. But the cursed business of Lenborough, in the midst of study, dissipation, and friendship, at times almost distracts me. I am surely in a worse situation than before I sold the estate, and what distresses me is, that

"His ego nec metas rerum, nec tempora pono."

Both Deyverdun and Clarke wish to be remembered to you. The former, who has more taste for the country than ——, could wish to visit you, but he sets out in a few days for the Continent with Lord Middleton. Adieu.

No. XLII.

The Same to the Same.

May 4, 1774.

DEAR HOLROYD,—Last night was the triumph of Boodle's. Our masquerade cost 2000 guineas. A sum that might have fertilised a province (I speak in your own style) vanished in a few hours, but not without leaving behind it the fame of the most splendid and elegant *fête* that was, perhaps, ever given in a seat of the arts and opulence. It would be as difficult to describe the magnificence of the scene as it would be easy to record the humour of the night. The one was above, the other below, all relation. I left the Pantheon about five this morning, rose at ten, took a good walk, and returned home to a more rational entertainment of Batt, Sir John Russell, and Lascelles, who dined with me. They have left me this moment; and were I to enumerate the things said of Sheffield, it would form a much longer letter than I have any inclination to write. Let it suffice that Sir John means to pass in Sussex the interval of the two terms. Everything, in a word, goes on very pleasantly, except the terrestrial business of Lenborough. Last Saturday se'nnight I wrote to ——, to press him to see —— and urge the arbitration. He has not condescended to answer me. All is a dead calm, sometimes more fatal than a storm. For God's sake send me advice. Adieu.

No. XLIII.

EDWARD GIBBON, Esq., *to* Mrs. GIBBON, Bath.

BOODLE'S, *May* 24, 1774.

DEAR MADAM,—Do you remember that there exists in the world one Edward Gibbon, a housekeeper in Bentinck Street? If the standard of writing and of affection were the same, I am sure he would ill deserve it. I do not wish to discover how many days—I am afraid I ought to use another word—have

elapsed since the date of my last, or even of your last letter, and yet such is the sluggish nature of the beast, that I am afraid nothing but the arrival of Mrs. Bonfoy and the expectation of Mr. Eliot could have roused me from my lethargy. The lady gave me great satisfaction by her general account of your health and spirits, but communicated some uneasiness by the mention of a little encounter in the style of one of Don Quixote's, but which proved, I hope, as trifling as you at first imagined it. For my own part, I am well in mind and body, busy with my books, which may perhaps produce something next year, either to tire or amuse the world, and every day more satisfied with my present mode of life, which I always believed was calculated to make me happy. My only remaining uneasiness is Lenborough, which is not terminated. By Holroyd's advice, I rather try what may be obtained by a little more patience than rush at once into the horrors of Chancery. But let us talk of something else. Mrs. Porten grows younger every day. You remember, I think, in Newman Street, an agreeable woman, Miss W——? The Under-Secretary is seriously in love with her, and seriously uneasy that his precarious situation precludes him from happiness. We shall soon see which will get the better, love or reason. I bet three to two on love.

Guess my surprise when Mrs. Gibbon of Northamptonshire suddenly communicated her arrival. I immediately went to Surrey Street, where she lodged, but though I was no more than half an hour after nine, the saint had finished her evening devotions, and was already retired to rest. Yesterday morning, by appointment, I breakfasted with her at eight o'clock, dined with her to-day at two in Newman Street, and am just returned from setting her down. She is, in truth, a very great curiosity; her dress and figure exceed anything we had at the masquerade; her language and ideas belong to the last century. However, in point of religion she was rational; that is to say, silent. I do not believe that she asked a single question or said the least thing concerning it. To me she behaved with great cordiality, and in her way expressed a great regard,

Mrs. Porten tells me that she has just written to you. She ought to go to a masquerade once a year. Did you think her such a girl?—I am, dear Madam, most truly yours.

No. XLIV.

EDWARD GIBBON, Esq., *to* J. HOLROYD, Esq.

BOODLE'S, *May* 24, 1774.

I wrote three folio pages to you this morning, and yet you complain. Have reason, and have mercy; consider all the excellent reasons for silence which I gave you in one of my last, and expect my arrival in Sussex, when I shall talk more in a quarter of an hour than I could write in a day. *Apropos* of that arrival, never pretend to allure me by painting in odious colours the dust of London. I love the dust, and whenever I move into the Weald, it is to visit you and my lady, and not your trees. About this-day-month I mean to give you a visitation. I leave it to Guise, Clarke, and the other light horse to prance down for a day or two. They all talk of mounting, but will not fix the day. Sir John Russell, whom I salute, has brought you, I suppose, all the news of Versailles. Let me only add that the Mesdames, by attending their father, have both got the small-pox. I can make nothing of —— or his lawyer. You will swear at the shortness of this letter.—Swear.

No. XLV.

The Same to the Same.

Saturday evening, August 27, 1774.

By your submission to the voice of reason, you eased me of a heavy load of anxiety. I did not like your enterprise. . . . . As to papers, I will show you that I can keep them safe till we meet. What think you of the Turks and Russians? Romanzow is a great man. He wrote an account of his amazing success to Mouskin Pouskin here, and declared his intention of

retiring as soon as he had conducted the army home, desiring that Pouskin would send him the best plan he could procure of an English gentleman's farm. In his answer, Pouskin promised to get it, but added that, at the same time, he should send the Empress a plan of Blenheim. A handsome compliment, I think. My lady and Maria as usual.

No. XLVI.

The Same to the Same.

BENTINCK STREET, *September* 10, 1774.

Since Heberden is returned, I think the road lies plain before you—I mean the turnpike road. The only party which in good sense can be embraced is, without delay, to bring my lady to Bentinck Street, where you may inhabit two or three nights, and have any advice (Turton, Heberden, &c.) which the town may afford in a case that most assuredly ought not to be trifled with. Do this as you value our good opinion. The Cantabs are strongly in the same sentiments. There can be no apprehensions of late hours, &c., as none of Mrs. H.'s raking acquaintance are in town. . . . . You give me no account of the works. When do you inhabit the library? Turn over—great things await you.

It is surely infinite condescension for a senator to bestow his attention on the affairs of a juryman. A senator? Yes, Sir, at last

> "Quod . . . Divûm promittere nemo
> Audcret, volvenda dies, en attulit ultro."

Yesterday morning, about half an hour after seven, as I was destroying an army of barbarians, I heard a double rap at the door, and my friend —— was soon introduced. After some idle conversation, he told me that if I was desirous of being in Parliament he had an independent seat very much at my service. . . . This is a fine prospect opening upon me; and if next spring I should take my seat and publish my book, it will be a very memorable era in my life. I am ignorant whether my borough will be ——. You despise boroughs, and fly at nobler game. Adieu.

No. XLVII.

The Same to the Same.

December 2, 1774.

I send you enclosed a dismal letter from Hugonin. Return it without delay, with observations. A manifesto has been sent to ——, which must, I think, produce immediate peace or war. Adieu. We shall have a warm day on the Address next Monday. A number of young members! Whitshed, a dry man, assured me that he heard one of them ask whether the King always sat in that chair, pointing to the Speaker's. Adieu.

No. XLVIII.

The Same to the Same.

BOODLE'S, *January* 31, 1775.

Sometimes people do not write because they are too idle, and sometimes because they are too busy. The former was usually my case, but at present it is the latter. The fate of Europe and America seems fully sufficient to take up the time of one man, and especially of a man who gives up a great deal of time for the purpose of public and private information. I think I have sucked Mauduit and Hutcheson very dry; and if my confidence was equal to my eloquence, and my eloquence to my knowledge, perhaps I might make no very intolerable speaker. At all events, I fancy I shall try to expose myself—

"Semper ego auditor tantum? nunquamne reponam?"

For my own part, I am more and more convinced that we have both the right and the power on our side, and that, though the effort may be accompanied with some melancholy circumstances, we are now arrived at the decisive moment of preserving or of losing for ever both our trade and Empire. We expect next Thursday or Friday to be a very great day. Hitherto we have been chiefly employed in reading papers and rejecting petitions.

Petitions were brought from London, Bristol, Norwich, &c., framed by party and designed to delay. By the aid of some Parliamentary quirks, they have been all referred to a separate inactive committee, which Burke calls a committee of oblivion, and are now considered as dead in law. I could write you fifty little House of Commons stories, but, from their number and nature, they suit better a conference than a letter. Our general divisions are about 250 to 80 or 90. Adieu.

No. XLIX.

EDWARD GIBBON, Esq., *to* Mrs. GIBBON, Bath.

LONDON, *January* 31, 1775.

DEAR MADAM,—An idle man has no time, and a busy man very little. As yet the House of Commons turns out very well to me, and though it should never prove of any real benefit to me, I find it at least a very agreeable coffee-house. We are plunging every day deeper and deeper into the great business of America; and I have hitherto been a zealous, though silent, friend to the cause of Government, which, in this instance, I think the cause of England. I passed about ten days, as I designed, at Uppark. I found Lord —— and fourscore foxhounds.

The troubles of Beriton are perfectly composed, and the insurgents reduced to a state, though not a temper, of submission. You may suppose I heard a great deal of Petersfield. I.—— means to convict your friend of bribery, to transport him for using a second time old stamps, and to prove that Petersfield is still a part of the manor of Beriton. I remain an impartial spectator.—I am, dear Madam, most truly yours.

No. L.

EDWARD GIBBON, Esq., *to* J. B. HOLROYD, Esq.

February 8, 1775.

I am not d——d, according to your charitable wishes, because I have not acted; there was such an inundation of speakers,

young speakers in every sense of the word, both on Thursday in the Grand Committee, and Monday on the Report to the House, that neither Lord George Germaine nor myself could find room for a single word. The principal men both days were Fox and Wedderburne, on the opposite sides; the latter displayed his usual talents; the former, taking the vast compass of the question before us, discovered powers for regular debate which neither his friends hoped nor his enemies dreaded. We voted an address —304 to 105—of lives and fortunes, declaring Massachusetts Bay in a state of rebellion. More troops, but I fear not enough, go to America, to make an army of 10,000 men at Boston; three generals, Howe, Burgoyne, and Clinton. In a few days we stop the ports of New England. I cannot write volumes, but I am more and more convinced that with firmness all may go well, yet I sometimes doubt. I am now writing with ladies, Sir S. Porten and his bride, and two card-tables in the library. As to my silence, judge of my situation by last Monday. I am on the Grenvillian committee of Downton. We always sit from ten to three and a half; after which, that day, I went into the House and sat till three in the morning. Adieu.

No. LI.

The Same to the Same.

February 25, 1775.

We go on with regard to America, if we can be said to go on; for on last Monday a conciliatory motion of allowing the Colonies to tax themselves was introduced by Lord North, in the midst of lives and fortunes, war and famine. We went into the House in confusion, every moment expecting that the Bedfords would fly into rebellion against those measures. Lord North rose six times to appease the storm, but all in vain, till at length Sir Gilbert declared for the Administration, and the troops all rallied under their proper standard. On Wednesday we had the Middlesex election. I was a patriot, sat by the Lord Mayor, who spoke well and with temper, but before the end of the debate fell fast asleep. I am

still a mute; it is more tremendous than I imagined; the great speakers fill me with despair, the bad ones with terror.

When do you move? My lady answered like a woman of sense, spirit, and good nature. Neither she nor I could bear it. She was right, and the Duchess of Braganza would have made the same answer. Adieu.

No. LII.

EDWARD GIBBON, Esq., *to* Mrs. GIBBON.

March 30, 1775.

DEAR MADAM,—I hardly know how to take up the pen. I talked in my last of two or three posts, and I am almost ashamed to calculate how many have elapsed. I will endeavour for the future to be less scandalous. Only believe that my heart is innocent of the laziness of my hand. I do not mean to have recourse to the stale and absurd excuse of business, though I have really had a very considerable hurry of new Parliamentary business; one day, for instance, of seventeen hours, from ten in the morning till between three and four the next morning. It is, upon the whole, an agreeable improvement in my life, and forms just the mixture of business, of study, and of society which I always imagined I should, and now find I do, like. Whether the House of Commons may ever prove of benefit to myself or country is another question. As yet I have been mute. In the course of our American affairs I have sometimes had a wish to speak, but though I felt tolerably prepared as to the matter, I dreaded exposing myself in the manner, and remained in my seat, safe but inglorious. Upon the whole, though I still believe I shall try, I doubt whether nature—not that in some instances I am ungrateful—has given me the talents of an orator, and I feel that I came into Parliament much too late to exert them. Do you hear of Port Eliot coming to Bath? and, above all, do you hear of Charles Street[1] coming to Bentinck Street, in its way to Essex, &c. Adieu.—Dear Madam, I am most truly yours.

[1] Mrs. Gibbon's residence at Bath.

No. LIII.

The Same to the Same.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, *May* 2, 1775.

DEAR MADAM,—I accept of the Pomeranian Lady with gratitude and pleasure, and shall be impatient to form an acquaintance with her. My presentations at St. James's passed graciously. My dinner at Twickenham was attended with less ceremony and more amusement. If they turned out Lord North to-morrow, they would still leave him one of the best companions in the kingdom. By this time I suppose the Eliots are with you. I am sure you will say everything kind and proper on the occasion. I am glad to hear of the approbation of my constituents for my vote on the Middlesex election. On the subject of America I have been something more of a courtier. You know, I suppose, that Holroyd is just stepped over to Ireland for a fortnight? He passed three days with me on his way. Deyverdun had left me just before your letter arrived, which I shall soon have an opportunity of conveying to him. Though, I flatter myself, he broke from me with some degree of uneasiness, the engagement could not be declined. At the end of four years he has an annuity of £100 for life, and may for the remainder of his days enjoy a decent independence in that country, which a philosopher would perhaps prefer to the rest of Europe. For my own part, after the hurry of the town and of Parliament, I am now retired to my villa in Bentinck Street, which I begin to find a very pleasing solitude, at least as well as if it were two hundred miles from London; because when I am tired of the Roman Empire I can laugh away the evening at Foote's theatre, which I could not do in Hampshire or Cornwall.—I am, dear Madam, most truly yours.

No. LIV.

EDWARD GIBBON, Esq., *to* J. B. HOLROYD, Esq.

BENTINCK STREET, *August* 1, 1775.

Your apprehensions of a precipitate work, &c., are perfectly groundless. I should be much more addicted to a contrary extreme. The head is now printing: true, but it was written last year and the year before. The first chapter has been composed *de nouveau* three times, the second twice, and all the others have undergone views, corrections, &c. As to the tail, it is perfectly formed and digested, and were I so much given to self-content and haste, it is almost all written. The ecclesiastical part, for instance, is written out in fourteen sheets, which I mean to *refondre* from beginning to end. As to the friendly critic, it is very difficult to find one who has leisure, candour, freedom, and knowledge sufficient. However, Batt and Deyverdun have read and observed. After all, the public is the best critic. I print no more than five hundred copies of the first edition; and the second, as it happens frequently to my betters, may receive many improvements. So much for Rome. We have nothing new from America. But I can venture to assure you that the Administration is now as unanimous and decided as the occasion requires. Something will be done this year; but in the spring the force of the country will be exerted to the utmost. Scotch Highlanders, Irish Papists, Hanoverians, Canadians, Indians, &c., will all, in various shapes, be employed. Parliament meets the first week in November. I think his Catholic Majesty may be satisfied with his summer's amusement. The Spaniards fought with great bravery, and made a fine retreat; but our Algerine friends surpassed them as much in conduct as in number. Adieu.

The Duchess has stopped Foote's piece. She sent for him to Kingston House, and threatened, bribed, argued, and wept for about two hours. He assured her that if the Chamberlain was obstinate he should publish it, with a dedication to her Grace.

No. LV.

EDWARD GIBBON, Esq., *to* Mrs. GIBBON, Bath.

LONDON, *August* 1775.

DEAR MADAM,—Will you accept my present literary business as an excuse for my not writing? I think you will be in the wrong if you do, since I was just as idle before. At all events, however, it is better to say three words than to be totally a dumb dog. *Apropos* of dog, but not of dumb: your Pomeranian is the comfort of my life; pretty, impertinent, fantastical, all that a young lady of fashion ought to be. I flatter myself that our passion is reciprocal. I am just at present engaged in a great historical work, no less than a History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, with the first volume of which I may very possibly oppress the public next winter. It would require some pages to give a more particular idea of it; but I shall only say in general, that the subject is curious, and never yet treated as it deserves; and that during some years it has been in my thoughts, and even under my pen. Should the attempt fail, it must be by the fault of the execution. Adieu.—Dear Madam, believe me most truly yours.

No. LVI.

EDWARD GIBBON, Esq., *to* J. B. HOLROYD, Esq.

BENTINCK STREET, *October* 14, 1775.

I send you two pieces of intelligence from the best authority, and which, unless you hear them from some other quarter, I do not wish you should talk much about. 1st. When the Russians arrive, if they refresh themselves in England or Ireland, will you go and see their camp? We have great hopes of getting a body of these barbarians. In consequence of some very plain advances, King George, with his own hand, wrote a very polite epistle to sister Kitty, requesting her friendly assistance. Full powers and

instructions were sent at the same time to Gunning to agree for any force between five and twenty thousand men, *carte blanche* for the terms; on condition, however, that they should serve, not as auxiliaries, but as mercenaries, and that the Russian general should be absolutely under the command of the British. They daily and hourly expect a messenger, and hope to hear that the business is concluded. The worst of it is, that the Baltic will soon be frozen up, and that it must be late next year before they can get to America. 2nd. In the meantime we are not quite easy about Canada; and even if it should be safe from an attack, we cannot flatter ourselves with the expectation of bringing down that martial people on the Back Settlements. The priests are ours; the gentlemen very prudently wait the event, and are disposed to join the stronger party; but the same lawless spirit and impatience of government which have infected our Colonies are gone forth among the Canadian peasants, over whom, since the conquest, the *noblesse* have lost much of their ancient influence. Another thing which will please and surprise is the assurance which I received from a man who might tell me a lie, but who could not be mistaken, that no arts, no management whatsoever, have been used to procure the addresses which fill the *Gazette*, and that Lord North was as much surprised at the first that came up as we could be at Sheffield. We shall have, I suppose, some brisk skirmishing in Parliament, but the business will soon be decided by our superior weight of fire. *Apropos*, I believe there has been some vague but serious conversation about calling out the militia. The new levies go on very slowly in Ireland. The Dissenters, both there and here, are violent and active. Adieu. I embrace my lady and Maria.

No. LVII.

GEORGE LEWIS SCOTT, Esq., *to* EDWARD GIBBON, Esq.

December 29, 1775.

DEAR SIR,—I am obliged to you for the liberty of perusing part of your work. What I have read has given me a great

deal of pleasure. I have found but few slips of the press or the pen.

The style of the work is clear, and every way agreeable, and I dare say you will be thought to have written with all due moderation and decency with respect to received (at least once received) opinions. The notes and quotations will add not a little to the value of the work. The authority of French writers, so familiar to you, has not infected you, however, with the fault of superficial and careless quotations. I find, since I saw you, that I must be in the chair at the Excise Office to-morrow, which service will confine me too much for a week to permit me to wait upon you so soon as I could wish.—I am very truly, dear Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant.

No. LVIII.

EDWARD GIBBON, Esq., *to* J. B. HOLROYD, Esq.

LONDON, *January* 18, 1776.

How do you do? Are you alive? Are you buried under mountains of snow? I write merely to triumph in the superiority of my own situation, and to rejoice in my own prudence in not going down to Sheffield Place, as I seriously, but foolishly, intended to do last week. We proceed triumphantly with the Roman Empire, and shall certainly make our appearance before the end of next month. I have nothing public. You know we have got 18,000 Germans from Hesse, Brunswick, and Hesse-Darmstadt. I think our meeting will be lively—a spirited minority and a desponding majority. The higher people are placed the more gloomy are their countenances, the more melancholy their language. You may call this cowardice, but I fear it arises from their knowledge—a late knowledge—of the difficulty and magnitude of the business. Quebec is not yet taken. I hear that Carleton is determined never to capitulate with rebels. A glorious resolution if it were supported with 50,000 men! Adieu. I embrace my lady and Maria. Make my excuses to the latter for having neglected her birthday.

No. LIX.

The Same to the Same.

January 29, 1776.

Hares, &c., arrived safe; were received with thanks, and devoured with appetite. Send more; *id est*, of hares. I believe, in my last, I forgot saying anything of the son of Fergus. His letters reached him. What think you of the season? Siberia, is it not? A pleasant campaign in America! I read and pondered your last, and think that in the place of Lord G. G. you might perhaps succeed; but I much fear that our leaders have not a genius which can act at the distance of three thousand miles. You know that a large draught of Guards are just going to America. Poor dear creatures! We are met, but no business. Next week may be busy—Scotch militia, &c. Roman Empire (first part) will be published in a week or fortnight. At last I have heard Texier. Wonderful! Embrace my lady. The weather is too cold to turn over the page. Adieu.

Since this I received your last, and honour your care of the old women; a respectable name, which, in spite of my lady, may suit judges, bishops, generals, &c. I am rejoiced to hear of Maria's inoculation. I know not when you have done so wise a thing. You may depend upon getting an excellent house. Adieu.

No. LX.

The Same to the Same.

BENTINCK STREET, *February* 9, 1776.

You are mistaken about your dates. It is to-morrow se'nnight, the 17th, that my book will decline into the world.

I am glad to find that by degrees you begin to understand the advantage of a civilised city. Adieu. No public business. Parliament has sat every day, but we have not had a single debate. I think you will have the book on Monday. The parent is not forgot, though I had not a single one to spare.

No. LXI.

EXTRACT *of a* LETTER *from* Dr. ROBERTSON *to* Mr. STRAHAN, *dated Edinburgh College, March* 15, 1776.

. . . . . Since my last I have read Mr. Gibbon's History with much attention and great pleasure. It is a work of very high merit indeed. He possesses that industry of research without which no man deserves the name of an historian. His narrative is perspicuous and interesting; his style is elegant and forcible, though in some passages I think rather too laboured, and in others too quaint. But these defects are amply compensated by the beauty of the general flow of language and a very peculiar happiness in many of his expressions. I have traced him in many of his quotations (for experience has taught me to suspect the accuracy of my brother penmen), and I find he refers to no passage but what he has seen with his own eyes. I hope the book will be as successful as it deserves to be. I have not yet read the two last chapters, but am sorry, from what I have heard of them, that he has taken such a tone in them as will give great offence and hurt the sale of the book.

No. LXII.

Mr. FERGUSON *to* Mr. GIBBON.

EDINBURGH, *March* 19, 1776.

DEAR SIR,—I received about eight days ago, after I had been reading your History, the copy which you have been so good as to send me, and for which I now trouble you with my thanks. But even if I had not been thus called upon to offer you my respects, I could not have refrained from congratulating you on the merit and undoubted success of this valuable performance. The persons of this place whose judgment you will value most agree in opinion that you have made a great addition to the classical literature of England, and given us what Thucydides proposed leaving with his own countrymen, a possession in perpetuity. Men of a certain modesty and merit always exceed the

expectations of their friends; and it is with very great pleasure I tell you that, although you must have observed in me every mark of consideration and regard, this is, nevertheless, the case; I receive your instruction and study your model with great deference, and join with every one else in applauding the extent of your plan in hands so well able to execute it. Some of your readers, I find, were impatient to get at the fifteenth chapter, and began at that place. I have not heard much of their criticism, but am told that many doubt of your orthodoxy. I wish to be always of the charitable side, while I own you have proved that the clearest stream may become foul when it comes to run over the muddy bottom of human nature. I have not stayed to make any particular remarks. If any should occur on the second reading, I shall not fail to lay in my claim to a more needed and more useful admonition from you in case I ever produce anything that merits your attention. And am, with the greatest respect, dear Sir, your most obliged and most humble servant.

No. LXIII.

EXTRACT *of a* LETTER *from* Mr. DAVID HUME *to* Mr. STRAHAN, *dated Edinburgh, April* 8, 1776.

. . . . . I am very much taken with Mr. Gibbon's Roman History, which came from your press, and am glad to hear of its success. There will no books of reputation now be printed in London but through your hands and Mr. Cadell's. The author tells me that he is already preparing a second edition. I resolved to have given him my advice with regard to the manner of printing it, but as I am now writing to you, it is the same thing. He ought certainly to print the number of the chapter at the head of the margin; it would be better if something of the contents could also be added. One is also plagued with his notes, according to the present method of printing the book. When a note is announced you turn to the end of the volume, and there you often find nothing but a reference to an authority. All these authorities ought only to be printed at the margin or the bottom of the page.

I desire a copy of my new edition should be sent to Mr. Gibbon, as wishing that gentleman, whom I so highly value, should peruse me in a form the least imperfect to which I can bring my work.

. . . . . Dr. Smith's performance is another excellent work that has come from your press this winter, but I have ventured to tell him that it requires too much thought to be as popular as Mr. Gibbon's.

No. LXIV.

Mr. Ferguson *to* Mr. Gibbon.

Edinburgh, *April* 18, 1776.

Dear Sir,—I should make some apology for not writing you sooner an answer to your obliging letter; but if you should honour me frequently with such requests, you will find that, with very good intentions, I am a very dilatory and irregular correspondent. I am sorry to tell you that our respectable friend[1] is still declining in his health; he is greatly emaciated, and loses strength. He talks familiarly of his near prospect of dying. His mother, it seems, died under the same symptoms; and it appears so little necessary or proper to flatter him that no one attempts it. I never observed his understanding more clear or his humour more pleasant and lively. He has a great aversion to leave the tranquillity of his own house to go in search of health among inns and hostlers; and his friends here gave way to him for some time, but now think it necessary that he should make an effort to try what change of place and air, or anything else Sir John Pringle may advise, can do for him. I left him this morning in the mind to comply in this article, and I hope that he will be prevailed on to set out in a few days. He is just now fifty-five.

I am very glad that the pleasure you give us recoils a little on yourself, through our feeble testimony. I have, as you suppose, been employed, at any intervals of leisure or rest I have had for some years, in taking notes or collecting materials for a

[1] Mr. Hume.

history of the distractions that broke down the Roman Republic, and ended in the establishment of Augustus and his immediate successors. The compliment you are pleased to pay I cannot accept of, even to my subject. Your subject now appears with advantages it was not supposed to have had; and I suspect that the magnificence of the mouldering ruin will appear more striking than the same building when the view is perplexed with scaffolding, workmen, and disorderly lodgers, and the ear is stunned with the noise of destructions and repairs and the alarms of fire. The night which you begin to describe is solemn, and there are gleams of light superior to what is to be found in any other time. I comfort myself that, as my trade is the study of human nature, I could not fix on a more interesting corner of it than the end of the Roman Republic. Whether my compilations should ever deserve the attention of any one besides myself must remain to be determined after they are further advanced. I take the liberty to trouble you with the enclosed for Mr. Smith, whose uncertain stay in London makes me at a loss how to direct for him. You have both such reason to be pleased with the world just now, that I hope you are pleased with each other.—I am, with the greatest respect, dear Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant.

No. LXV.

EDWARD GIBBON, Esq., *to* J. B. HOLROYD, Esq.

LONDON, *May* 20, 1776.

I am angry that you should impede my noble designs of visiting foreign parts, more especially as I have an advantage which Sir Wilful had not, that of understanding your foreign lingos. With regard to Mrs. Gibbon, her intended visit, to which I was not totally a stranger, will do me honour; and though it should delay my emigration till the end of July, there will still remain the months of August, September, and October. Above all, abstain from giving the least hint to any Bath correspondent, and perhaps, if I am not provoked by opposition, the thing may not be absolutely certain. At all events, you may depend on a previous visit.

At present I am very busy with the Neckers. I live with her just as I used to do twenty years ago, laugh at her Paris varnish, and oblige her to become a simple, reasonable Suissesse. The man, who might read English husbands lessons of proper and dutiful behaviour, is a sensible, good-natured creature. In about a fortnight I launch again into the world in the shape of a quarto volume. Cadell assures me that he never remembered so eager and impatient a demand for a second edition. The town is beginning to break up; the day after to-morrow we have our last day in the House of Commons, to inquire into the instructions of the Commissioners. I like the man, and the motion appears plain. Adieu. I dined with Lord Palmerston to-day; great dinner of catches. I embrace my lady and the Maria.

No. LXVI.

The Same to the Same.

To tell you anything of the change, or rather changes, of governors, I must have known something of them myself; but all is darkness, confusion, and uncertainty, to such a degree that people do not even know what lies to invent. The news from America has indeed diverted the public attention into another and far greater channel. All that you see in the papers of the repulse at Quebec, as well as the capture of Lee, rests on the authority (a very unexceptionable one) of the provincial papers, as they have been transmitted by Governor Tryon from New York. Howe is well, and eats plentifully; and the weather seems to clear up so fast that, according to the English custom, we have passed from the lowest despondency to a full assurance of success. My new birth happened last Monday; seven hundred of the fifteen hundred were gone yesterday. I now understand, from pretty good authority, that Dr. ——, the friend and chaplain of ——, is actually sharpening his goose-quill against the two last chapters. Adieu.

June the 6th, 1776, from Almack's, where I was chosen last week.

No. LXVII.

The Same to the Same.

ALMACK'S, *June* 24, 1776.

Yes, yes, I am alive and well; but what shall I say? Town grows empty, and this house, where I have passed very agreeable hours, is the only place which still unites the flower of the English youth. The style of living, though somewhat expensive, is exceedingly pleasant, and notwithstanding the rage of play, I have found more entertaining and even rational society here than in any other club to which I belong. Mrs. Gibbon still hangs in suspense, and seems to consider a town expedition with horror. I think, however, that she will be soon in motion, and when I have her in Bentinck Street we shall perhaps talk of a Sheffield excursion. I am now deeply engaged in the reign of Constantine, and from the specimens which I have already seen, I can venture to promise that the second volume will not be less interesting than the first. The fifteen hundred copies are moving off with decent speed, and the obliging Cadell begins to mutter something of a third edition for next year. No news of Deyverdun or his French translation. What a lazy dog! Madame Necker has been gone a great while. I gave her, *en partant*, the most solemn assurances of following her paws in less than two months, but the voice of indolence begins to whisper a thousand difficulties, and unless your absurd policy should thoroughly provoke me, the Parisian journey may possibly be deferred. I rejoice in the progress of —— towards light. We are in expectation of American news. Carleton is made a Knight of the Bath. The old report of Washington's resignation and quarrel with the Congress seems to revive. Adieu.

No. LXVIII.

EXTRACT *of a* LETTER *from* Dr. GEORGE CAMPBELL, Professor at Aberdeen, *to* Mr. STRAHAN, *dated Aberdeen, June* 25, 1776.

I have lately read over one of your last winter's publications with very great pleasure and, I hope, some instruction. My expectations were indeed high when I began it, but I assure you the entertainment I received greatly exceeded them. What made me fall to it with the greater avidity was, that it had in part a pretty close connection with a subject I had occasion to treat sometimes in my theological lectures, to wit, the Rise and Progress of the Hierarchy; and you will believe that I was not the less pleased to discover in a historian of so much learning and penetration so great a coincidence with my own sentiments in relation to some obscure points in the Christian antiquities. I suppose I need not now inform you that the book I mean is Gibbon's History of the Fall of the Roman Empire, which, in respect of the style and manner as well as the matter, is a most masterly performance.

No. LXIX.

EDWARD GIBBON, Esq., *to* J. B. HOLROYD, Esq.

SATURDAY, *August* 1776.

We expect you at five o'clock Tuesday, without a sore throat. You have ere this heard of the shocking accident which takes up the attention of the town. Our old acquaintance . . . . . By his own indolence rather than extravagance his circumstances were embarrassed, and he had frequently declared himself tired of life. No public news nor any material expected till the end of this or the beginning of next month, when Howe will probably have collected his whole force. A tough business indeed. You see by their declaration that they have now passed the Rubicon, and rendered the work of a treaty infinitely more difficult. You will perhaps say, so

much the better; but I do assure you that the thinking friends of Government are by no means sanguine. I take the opportunity of eating turtle with Garrick at Hampton. Adieu.

No. LXX.

The Same to the Same.

Saturday, three-quarters past eleven, 1776.

For the present I am so deeply engaged that you must renounce the hasty apparition at Sheffield Place; but if you should be very impatient, I will try, after the meeting, to run down, between the Friday and Monday, and bring you the last editions of things. At present nought but expectation. The attack on me is begun—an anonymous eighteenpenny pamphlet, which will get the author more glory in the next world than in this. The heavy troops, Watson and another, are on their march. Adieu.

No. LXXI.

EXTRACT *of a* LETTER *from* Mr. WALLACE *to* Mr. STRAHAN, *dated Edinburgh, August* 30, 1776.

Alas for David Hume![1] His friends have sustained a great loss in his death. He was interred yesterday at a place he lately purchased in the burying-ground on the Calton:—

> "For who, to dumb forgetfulness a prey,
> This pleasing, anxious being e'er resigned,
> Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
> Nor cast one longing, lingering look behind?"

A monument on that airy, elevated cemetery, which, on account of a magnificent terrace now carried round the hill, is greatly frequented, will be extremely conspicuous, and must often call his name to remembrance. It has been remarked that the same day on which Lucretius died gave birth to Virgil; and amidst their

[1] Mr. Hume died at Edinburgh, August 25, 1776.

late severe loss, philosophy and literature will probably find themselves not wholly disconsolate, on reflecting that the same year in which they were deprived of Hume, Gibbon arose—his superior in some respects. This gentleman's History of the Decline of the Roman Empire appears to me, in point of composition, incomparably the finest production in English, without any exception. I hardly thought the language capable of arriving at his correctness, perspicuity, and strength.

No. LXXII.

EDWARD GIBBON, Esq., *to* J. B. HOLROYD, Esq.

1776.

I hope you bark and growl at my silence;—growl and bark. This is not a time for correspondence. Parliament, visits, dinners, suppers, and an hour or two stolen with difficulty for the Decline leave but very little leisure. I send you the *Gazette*, and have scarcely anything to add, except that about five hundred of them have deserted to us, and that the New York incendiaries were immediately, and very justifiably, destined to the cord. Lord G. G., with whom I had a long conversation last night, was in high spirits, and hopes to reconquer Germany in America. On the side of Canada, he only fears Carleton's slowness, but entertains great expectations that the light troops and Indians, under Sir William Johnson, who are sent from Oswego down the Mohawk river to Albany, will oblige the provincials to give up the defence of the Lakes for fear of being cut off. The report of a foreign war subsides. House of Commons dull, and Opposition talk of suspending hostilities from despair.

An anonymous pamphlet and Dr. Watson out against me; in my opinion, the former feeble and very illiberal; the latter uncommonly genteel. At last I have had a letter from Deyverdun: wretched excuses; nothing done; vexatious enough. To-morrow I write to Suard, a very skilful translator of Paris, who was here in the spring with the Neckers, to get him, if not too late, to undertake it. Adieu.

No. LXXIII.

Mr. GIBBON *to the* Rev. Dr. WATSON (*now* Bishop of Llandaff).

BENTINCK STREET, *November* 2, 1776.

Mr. Gibbon takes the earliest opportunity of presenting his compliments and thanks to Dr. Watson, and of expressing his sense of the liberal treatment which he has received from so candid an adversary. Mr. Gibbon entirely coincides in opinion with Dr. Watson, that, as their different sentiments on a very important period of history are now submitted to the public, they both may employ their time in a manner much more useful, as well as agreeable, than they could possibly do by exhibiting a single combat in the amphitheatre of controversy. Mr. Gibbon is therefore determined to resist the temptation of justifying, in a professed reply, any passages of his History which might perhaps be easily cleared from censure and misapprehension; but he still reserves to himself the privilege of inserting in a future edition some occasional remarks and explanations of his meaning. If any calls of pleasure or business should bring Dr. Watson to town, Mr. Gibbon would think himself happy in being permitted to solicit the honour of his acquaintance.

No. LXXIV.

Dr. WATSON *to* Mr. GIBBON.

CAMBRIDGE, *November* 4, 1776.

Dr. Watson accepts with pleasure Mr. Gibbon's polite invitation to a personal acquaintance. If he comes to town this winter, will certainly do himself the honour to wait upon him. Begs at the same time to assure Mr. Gibbon that he will be very happy to have an opportunity of showing him every civility, if curiosity or other motives should bring him to Cambridge. Dr. Watson can have some faint idea of Mr. Gibbon's difficulty in resisting the temptation he speaks of, from having been of late in a situation somewhat similar himself. It would be very extraordinary if Mr. Gibbon did not feel a parent's partiality for an offspring

which has justly excited the admiration of all who have seen it, and Dr. Watson would be the last person in the world to wish him to suppress any explanation which might tend to exalt its merits.

No. LXXV.

EDWARD GIBBON, Esq., *to* J. B. HOLROYD, Esq.

ALMACK'S, *November* 7, 1776.

Letters from Burgoyne. They embarked on the Lakes the 30th September, with 800 British sailors, 6000 regulars, and a naval force superior to any possible opposition; but the season was so far advanced that they expected only to occupy and strengthen Ticonderoga, and afterwards to return and take up their winter quarters in Canada. Yesterday we had a surprise in the House, from a proclamation of the Howes, which made its first appearance in the *Morning Post*, and which nobody seems to understand. By this time my lady may see that I have not much reason to fear my antagonists. Adieu till next Thursday.

No. LXXVI.

The Same to the Same.

Friday evening, November 22.

News from the Lakes. A naval combat, in which the provincials were repulsed with considerable loss. They burnt and abandoned Crown Point. Carleton is besieging Ticonderoga. Carleton, I say, for he is there; and it is apprehended that Burgoyne is coming home. We dismissed the Nabobs without a division. Burke and the Attorney-General spoke very well. Adieu.

No. LXXVII.

The Same to the Same.

BENTINCK STREET, *January* 18, 1777.

As I presume, my lady does not make a practice of tumbling downstairs every day after dinner, by this time the colours must

have faded, and the high places (I mean the temples) are reduced to a proper level. But what, in the name of the great prince, is the meaning of her declining the Urban expedition? Is it the spontaneous result of her own proud spirit, or does it proceed from the secret machinations of her domestic tyrant? At all events, I expect you will both remember your engagement of next Saturday in Bentinck Street with Donna Catherina, the Mountaineer,[1] &c. Things go on very prosperously in America. Howe is himself in the Jerseys, and will push at least as far as the Delaware River. The continental (perhaps now the rebel) army is in a great measure dispersed, and Washington, who wishes to cover Philadelphia, has not more than six or seven thousand men with him. Clinton designs to conquer Rhode Island in his way home. But, what I think of much greater consequence, a province made its submission, and desired to be reinstated in the peace of the King. It is, indeed, only poor little Georgia, and the application was made to Governor Tonyn of Florida. Some disgust at a violent step of the Congress, who removed the President of their Provincial Assembly, a leading and popular man, co-operated with the fear of the Indians, who began to amuse themselves with the exercise of scalping on their Back Settlements. Town fills, and we are mighty agreeable. Last year, on the Queen's Birthday, Sir G. Warren had his diamond star cut off his coat; this day the same accident happened to him again, with another star worth seven hundred pounds. He had better compound by the year. Adieu.

No. LXXVIII.

The Same to the Same.

ALMACK'S, *Wednesday evening.*

In due obedience to thy dread commands I write. But what shall I say? My life, though more lively than yours, is almost as uniform. A very little reading and writing in the morning, bones

[1] The Honourable General Simon Fraser.

or guts[1] from two to four, pleasant dinners from five to eight, and afterwards clubs, with an occasional assembly or supper. America affords nothing very satisfactory; though we have many flying reports, you may be assured that we are ignorant of the consequences of Trenton, &c. Charles Fox is now at my elbow, declaiming on the impossibility of keeping America, since a victorious army has been unable to maintain any extent of posts in the single province of Jersey. Lord North is out of danger; we trembled for his important existence. I now expect that my lady and you should fix the time for the promised visitation to Bentinck Street. March and April are open: choose. Adieu.

No. LXXIX.

The Same to the Same.

1777.

You deserve, and we exult in, your weather and disappointments. Why would you bury yourself? I dined in Downing Street Thursday last, and I think Wedderburne was at least as agreeable a companion as your timber-surveyor could be. Lee is certainly taken, but Lord North does not apprehend he is coming home. We are not clear whether he behaved with courage or pusillanimity when he surrendered himself, but Colonel Keene told me to-day that he had seen a letter from Lee since his confinement. "He imputes his being taken to the alertness of Harcourt and cowardice of his own guard, hopes he shall meet his fate with fortitude, but laments that freedom is not likely to find a resting-place in any part of the globe." It is said he was to succeed Washington. We know nothing certain of the Hessians, but there has been a blow. Adieu.

[1] Mr. Gibbon at this time attended Dr. Hunter's anatomical lectures.

No. LXXX.

The Same to the Same.

Saturday night, April 12, 1777.

Your despatch is gone to ——, and I flatter myself that by your assistance I shall be enabled to lose a thousand pounds upon Lenborough before I return from Paris. The day of my departure is not absolutely fixed; Sunday se'nnight, the 27th inst., is talked of. But if any India business should come on after the Civil List, it will occasion some delay; otherwise things are in great forwardness. Mrs. Gibbon is an enemy to the whole plan, and I must answer, in a long letter, two very ingenious objections which she has started—first, that I shall be confined or put to death by the priests; and secondly, that I shall sully my moral character by making love to Necker's wife. Before I go I will consult Newton about a power of attorney for you. By the bye, I wish you would remember a sort of promise and give me one day before I go. We talk chiefly of the Marquis de la Fayette, who was here a few weeks ago. He is about twenty, with an hundred and thirty thousand livres a year; the nephew of Noailles, who is ambassador here. He has bought the Duke of Kingston's yacht, and is gone to join the Americans. The Court appear to be angry with him. Adieu.

No. LXXXI.

The Same to the Same.

ATWOOD'S, *Saturday night, April* 19, 1777.

It is not possible as yet to fix the day of my departure; that circumstance depends on the state of India, and will not be determined till the General Court of next Wednesday. I know from the first authority, if the violence of the Proprietors about the Pigot can be checked in the India House by the influence of a Government majority, the Minister does not wish to exert the

omnipotence of Parliament, and I shall be dismissed from hence time enough to set forward on Thursday the 1st of May. On the contrary, should we be involved in those perplexing affairs, they may easily detain me till the middle of next month. But as all this is very uncertain, I direct you and my lady to appear in town to-morrow se'nnight. I have many things to say. We have been animated this week, and notwithstanding the strict economy recommended by Charles Fox and John Wilkes, we have paid the Royal debts. Adieu.

No. LXXXII.

The Same to the Same.

Monday night, April 21, 1777.

Bad news from Hampshire.——Support Hugonin; comfort me; correct or expel ——; sell Lenborough, and remove my temporal cares. When do you arrive?

No. LXXXIII.

The Same to the Same.

Wednesday night, April 23, 1777.

It is uncertain whether India comes to Westminster this year, and it is certain that Gibbon goes to Paris next Saturday se'nnight. Therefore Holroyd must appear in town the beginning of next week. Gibbon wants the cordial of his presence before the journey. My lady must come.

No. LXXXIV.

The Same to the Same.

DOVER, *Tuesday evening, May* 6, 1777.

My expedition does not begin very auspiciously. The wind, which for some days had been fair, paid me the compliment of changing on my arrival, and though I immediately secured a

vessel, it has been impossible to make the least use of it during the whole of this tedious day. It seems doubtful whether I shall get out to-morrow morning, and the captain assures me that the passage will have the double advantage of being both cold and rough. Last night a small privateer, fitted out at Dunkirk, with a commission from Dr. Franklin, attacked, took, and has carried into Dunkirk Road the Harwich packet. The King's messenger had just time to throw his despatches overboard. He passed through this town about four o'clock this afternoon, in his return to London. As the alarm is now given, our American friend will probably remain quiet, or will be soon caught, so that I have not much apprehension for my personal safety; but if so daring an outrage is not followed by punishment and restitution, it may become a very serious business, and may possibly shorten my stay at Paris.

Adieu. I shall write by the first opportunity, either from Calais or Philadelphia.

No. LXXXV.

The Same to the Same.

CALAIS, *Wednesday, May* 7, 1777.

Post nubila Phœbus. A pleasant passage, an excellent house, a good dinner with Lord ——, whom I found here. Easy Custom-House officers, fine weather, &c. I am detained to-night by the temptation of a French comedy in a theatre at the end of Dessein's garden, but shall be in motion to-morrow early, and hope to dine at Paris Saturday. Adieu. I think I am a punctual correspondent; but this beginning is too good to last.

No. LXXXVI.

Dr. WILLIAM ROBERTSON *to* Mr. GIBBON.

COLLEGE OF EDINBURGH, *June* 5, 1777.

SIR,—I have desired Mr. Strahan to take the liberty of sending you, in my name, a copy of the History of America, which I hope

you will do me the honour of accepting, as a testimony not only of my respect, but of my gratitude for the instruction which I have received from your writings, as well as the credit you have done me by the most obliging manner in which you have mentioned my name. I wish the present work may not diminish sentiments so flattering to me. I have taken much pains to obtain the approbation of those whose good opinion one ought to be solicitous to secure, and I trust that my industry at least will be applauded.

An unlucky indisposition prevented me from executing a scheme which I had formed of passing two months of last spring in London. The honour of being made known to you was one of the pleasures with which I had flattered myself. But I hope to be more fortunate next year, and beg that you will believe that I am, with great respect, Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant.

No. LXXXVII.

Mr. GIBBON *to* Dr. ROBERTSON.

PARIS, 1777.

SIR,—When I ventured to assume the character of historian, the first, the most natural, but at the same time the most ambitious wish which I entertained was to obtain the approbation of Dr. Robertson and of Mr. Hume, two names which friendship united and which posterity will never separate. I shall not, therefore, attempt to dissemble, though I cannot easily express the pleasure which I received from your obliging letter, as well as from the intelligence of your most valuable present. The satisfaction which I should otherwise have enjoyed, in common with the public, will now be heightened by a sentiment of a more personal and flattering nature, and I shall frequently whisper to myself that I have in some measure deserved the esteem of the writer whom I admire.

A short excursion which I have made to this place during the summer months has occasioned some delay in my receiving your

letter, and will prevent my possessing, till my return, the copy of your History which you so politely desired Mr. Strahan to send me. But I have already gratified the eagerness of my impatience; and although I was obliged to return the book much sooner than I could have wished, I have seen enough to convince me that the present publication will support, and, if possible, will extend, the fame of the author; that the materials are collected with diligence and arranged with skill; that the first book contains a learned and satisfactory account of the progress of discovery; that the achievements, the dangers, and the crimes of the Spanish adventurers are related with a temperate spirit; and that the most original, perhaps the most curious, portion of the history of human manners is at length rescued from the hands of sophists and declaimers. Lord Stormont and the few in this capital who have had an opportunity of perusing the History of America unanimously concur in the same sentiments. Your work is already become a favourite topic of public conversation, and M. Suard is repeatedly pressed, in my hearing, to fix the time when his translation will appear.

I flatter myself you will not abandon your design of visiting London next winter, as I already anticipate, in my own mind, the advantages which I shall derive from so pleasing and so honourable a connection. In the meanwhile I should esteem myself happy if you could think of any literary commission in the execution of which I might be useful to you at Paris, where I propose to stay till very near the meeting of Parliament. Let me, for instance, suggest an inquiry which cannot be indifferent to you, and which might perhaps be within my reach. A few days ago I dined with Bagniousky, the famous adventurer, who escaped from his exile at Kamschatka, and returned into Europe by Japan and China. His narrative was amusing, though I know not how far his veracity, in point of circumstances, may safely be trusted. It was his original design to penetrate through the North-East Passage; and he actually followed the coast of Asia as high as the latitude of 67° 35′, till his progress was stopped by the ice, in a strait between the two continents which was only seven leagues

broad. Thence he descended along the coast of America, as low as Cape Mendocin, but was repulsed by contrary winds in his attempts to reach the port of Acapulco. The journal of his voyage, with his original charts, is now at Versailles, in the *Depôt des Affaires Étrangers*, and if you conceived that it would be of any use to you for a second edition, I would try what might be obtained, though I am not ignorant of that mean jealousy which you yourself have experienced and so deservedly stigmatised.—I am, &c.

No. LXXXVIII.

Dr. ROBERTSON *to* Mr. GIBBON.

SIR,—I had the honour of your obliging letter, and I should be a very proud man indeed if I were not vain of the approbation which you are pleased to bestow upon me. As you will now have had an opportunity to peruse the book, which you had only seen when you wrote to me, I indulge myself in the hopes that the favourable opinion you had formed of it is not diminished. I am much pleased with your mentioning my friendship with Mr. Hume; I have always considered that as one of the most fortunate and honourable circumstances of my life. It is a felicity of the age and country in which we live, that men of letters can enter the same walk of science and go on successfully without feeling one sentiment of envy or rivalship. In the intercourse between Mr. Hume and me we always found something to blame as well as something to commend. I have received frequently very valuable criticisms on my performances from him, and I have sometimes ventured to offer him my strictures on his works. Permit me to hope for the same indulgence from you. If, in reading the History of America, anything, either in the matter or style, has occurred to you as reprehensible, I will deem it a most obliging favour if you will communicate it freely to me. I am certain of profiting by such a communication.

I return you thanks for your frank offer of executing any literary commission for me. I accept of it without ceremony,

and am flattered with the idea of receiving such aid from your hands. I know nothing of Bagniouski's adventures but what was published in some newspaper. If one can rely on his veracity, what he relates must be very interesting to me. If you had been writing the History of America, the question concerning the mode of peopling it might not, perhaps, have occupied your attention very much. But it was proper for me to consider it more fully. Bagniouski (if he may be credited) has seen what it may be useful for me to know. I can see no reason why the Court of France should be shy about communicating his journal and the charts which illustrate it; possibly my name may operate somewhat towards obtaining a copy of both. Your interposition, I am confident, will do a great deal. It will be very illiberal indeed if such a communication were refused. My Lord Stormont, by whose attention I have been much honoured, would not decline to give his aid were that necessary. But if your Court resembles that of Spain, I am afraid every proposal from an ambassador is received with some degree of jealousy. Your own private application will, I apprehend, be more effectual. As it is probable that a second edition may go to press early in the winter, it will add to the favour if you can soon inform me concerning the success of your negotiation. As this is something in the style of the *Corps Diplomatique*, allow me to recommend one of its members to you. Mr. Fullarton, the new Secretary of the Embassy, is a particular friend of mine. He is a young man of such qualities, both of head and heart, that I am sure you will esteem and love him. Please remember me to him.—I have the honour to be, with great respect, your obliged humble servant.

No. LXXXIX.

EDWARD GIBBON, Esq., *to* J. B. HOLROYD, Esq.

PARIS, *June* 16, 1777.

I told you what would infallibly happen, and you know enough of the nature of the beast not to be surprised at it. I have now

been at Paris exactly five weeks, during which time I have not written to any person whatsoever within the British dominions, except two lines of notification to Mrs. Gibbon. The demon of procrastination has at length yielded to the genius of friendship, assisted, indeed, by the powers of fear and shame. But when I have seated myself before a table, and begin to revolve all that I have seen and tasted during this busy period, I feel myself oppressed and confounded, and I am very near throwing away the pen and resigning myself to indolent despair. A complete history would require a volume at least as corpulent as the Decline and Fall; and if I attempt to select and abridge, besides the difficulty of the choice, there occur so many things which cannot properly be entrusted to paper, and so many others of too slight a texture to support the journey, that I am almost tempted to reserve for our future conversations the detail of my pleasures and occupations. But as I am sensible that you are rigid and impatient, I will try to convey in a few words a general idea of my situation as a man of the world and as a man of letters. You remember that the Neckers were my principal dependence, and the reception which I have met with from them very far surpassed my most sanguine expectations. I do not, indeed, lodge in their house, as it might incite the jealousy of the husband and procure me a *lettre de cachet*, but I live very much with them, and dine and sup whenever they have company, which is almost every day, and whenever I like it, for they are not in the least *exigeans*. Mr. Walpole gave me an introduction to Madame du Deffand, an agreeable young lady of eighty-two years of age, who has constant suppers and the best company in Paris. When you see the Duke of Richmond, he will give you an account of that house, where I meet him almost every evening. Ask him about Madame de Cambis. I have met the Duke of Choiseul at his particular request, dined by accident with Franklin, conversed with the Emperor, been presented at Court, and gradually, or rather rapidly, I find my acquaintance spreading over the most valuable parts of Paris. They pretend to like me, and whatever you may think of French professions, I am convinced that some at least

are sincere. On the other hand, I feel myself easy and happy in their company, and only regret that I did not come over two or three months sooner. Though Paris throughout the summer promises me a very agreeable society, yet I am hurt every day by the departure of men and women whom I begin to know with some familiarity, the departure of officers for their governments and garrisons, of bishops for their dioceses, and even of country gentlemen for their estates, as a rural taste gains ground in this country. So much for the general idea of my acquaintance; details would be endless, yet unsatisfactory. You may add to the pleasures of society those of the spectacles and promenades, and you will find that I lead a very agreeable life. Let me just condescend to observe that it is not extravagant. After decking myself out with silks and silver, the ordinary establishment of coach, lodging, servants, eating, and pocket expenses does not exceed sixty pounds per month. Yet I have two footmen in handsome liveries behind my coach, and my apartment is hung with damask. Adieu for the present. I have more to say, but were I to attempt any further progress you must wait another post, and you have already waited long enough, of all conscience.

Let me just in two words give you an idea of my day. I am now going (nine o'clock) to the King's library, where I shall stay till twelve; as soon as I am dressed I set out to dine with the Duke de Nivernois; shall go from thence to the French Comedy, into the Princess de Beauveau's *loge grillée*, and cannot quite determine whether I shall sup at Madame du Deffand's, Madame Necker's, or the Sardinian ambassadress's. Once more adieu.

I embrace my lady and Bambini. I shall with cheerfulness execute any of her commissions.

No. XC.

The Same to the Same.

PARIS, *August* 13, 1777.

Well, and who is the culprit now? Thus far had I written in the pride of my heart, and fully determined to inflict an epistle

upon you, even before I received any answer to my former. I was very near a bull. But this forward half-line lay ten days barren and inactive, till its generative powers were excited by the missive which I received yesterday. What a wretched piece of work do we seem to be making of it in America! The greatest force which any European Power ever ventured to transport into that continent is not strong enough even to attack the enemy; the naval strength of Great Britain is not sufficient to prevent the Americans (they have almost lost the appellation of rebels) from receiving every assistance that they wanted; and in the meantime you are obliged to call out the militia to defend your own coasts against their privateers. You possibly may expect from me some account of the designs and policy of the French Court, but I choose to decline that task, for two reasons—first, because you may find them laid open in every newspaper; secondly, because I live too much with their courtiers and Ministers to know anything about them. I shall only say that I am not under any immediate apprehensions of a war with France. It is much more pleasant as well as profitable to view in safety the raging of the tempest, occasionally to pick out some pieces of the wreck, and to improve their trade, their agriculture, and their finances while the two countries are *lento collisa duello*. Far from taking any step to put a speedy end to this astonishing dispute, I should not be surprised if next summer they were to lend their cordial assistance to England as to the weaker party. As to my personal engagement with the Duke of R., I recollect a few slight skirmishes, but nothing that deserves the name of a general engagement. The extravagance of some disputants, both French and English, who have espoused the cause of America sometimes inspires me with an extraordinary vigour. Upon the whole, I find it much easier to defend the justice than the policy of our measures; but there are certain cases where whatever is repugnant to sound policy ceases to be just.

The more I see of Paris the more I like it. The regular course of the society in which I live is easy, polite, and entertaining, and almost every day is marked by the acquisition of some new

acquaintance who is worth cultivating, or who, at least, is worth remembering. To the great admiration of the French, I regularly dine and regularly sup, drink a dish of strong coffee after each meal, and find my stomach a citizen of the world. The spectacles, particularly the Italian, and, above all, the French Comedies, which are open the whole summer, afford me an agreeable relaxation from company; and to show you that I frequent them from taste and not from idleness, I have not yet seen the Colisée, the Vauxhall, the Boulevards, or any of those places of entertainment which constitute Paris to most of our countrymen. Occasional trips to dine or sup in some of the thousand country-houses which are scattered round the environs of Paris serve to vary the scene. In the meanwhile the summer insensibly glides away, and the fatal month of October approaches, when I must change the house of Madame Necker for the House of Commons. I regret that I could not choose the winter instead of the summer for this excursion; I should have found many valuable persons, and should have preserved others whom I have lost as I began to know them. The Duke de Choiseul, who deserves attention both for himself and for keeping the best house in Paris, passes seven months of the year in Touraine; and though I have been tempted, I consider with horror a journey of sixty leagues into the country. The Princess of Beauveau, who is a most superior woman, has been absent above six weeks, and does not return till the 24th of this month. A large body of recruits will be assembled by the Fontainebleau journey; but in order to have a thorough knowledge of this splendid country, I ought to stay till the month of January; and if I could be sure that Opposition would be as tranquil as they were last year . . . . . I think your life has been as animated, or at least as tumultuous, and I envy you Lady Payne, &c., much more than either the Primate or the Chief-Justice. Let not the generous breast of my lady be torn by the black serpents of envy. She still possesses the first place in the sentiments of her slave; but the adventure of the fan was a mere accident, owing to Lord Carmarthen. Adieu. I think you may be satisfied. I say nothing of my terrestrial affairs.

No. XCI.

The Same to the Same.

BENTINCK STREET, *Saturday, November* 1777.

Had you four horns as well as four eyes and four hands, I should still maintain that you are the most unreasonable monster in the creation. My pain is lively, my weakness excessive, the season cold, and only twelve days remain to the meeting. Far from thinking of trips into the country, I shall be well satisfied if I am on my legs the 20th, in the medical sense of the word. At present I am a corpse, carried about by four arms which do not belong to me. Yet I try to smile; I salute the hen and chickens. Adieu. Writing is really painful.

No. XCII.

The Same to the Same.

Friday, November 14, 1777.

I do not like this disorder on your eyes; and when I consider your temperance and activity, I cannot understand why any spring of the machine should ever be deranged. With regard to myself, the gout has behaved in a very honourable manner; after a complete conquest, and after making me feel his power for some days, the generous enemy has disdained to abuse his victory, or to torment any longer an unresisting victim. He has already ceased to torture the lower extremities of your humble servant; the swelling is so amazingly diminished that they are no longer above twice their ordinary size. Yesterday I moved about the room with the laborious majesty of crutches; to-day I have exchanged them for a stick; and by the beginning of next week I hope, with due precaution, to take the air and to inure myself for the interesting representation of Thursday. How cursedly unlucky! I wanted to see you both; a thousand things to say and to hear, and everything of that kind broken to pieces. If

you are not able to come to Bentinck Street, I must contrive to steal three or four vacant days during the session and run down to Sheffield. The town fills, and I begin to have numerous *levées* and *couchées;* more properly the latter. We are still in expectation, but in the meanwhile we believe—I mean Ministers —that the news of Howe's victory and the taking of Philadelphia are true. Adieu.

No. XCIII.

The Same to the Same.

December 2, 1777.

By the enclosed you will see that America is not yet conquered. Opposition are very lively; and though in the House we keep our numbers, there seems to be an universal desire of peace, even on the most humble conditions. Are you still fierce?

No. XCIV.

The Same to the Same.

Monday night, December 1777.

I congratulate your noble firmness, as I suppose it must arise from the knowledge of some hidden resources, which will enable us to open the next campaign with new armies of fifty or sixty thousand men. But I believe you will find yourself obliged to carry on this glorious war almost alone. It would be idle to dispute any more about politics, as we shall so soon have an opportunity of a personal combat. Your journey gives me some hopes that you have not entirely lost your reason. Your bed shall be ready.

No. XCV.

The Same to the Same.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, *Thursday, Dec.* 4, 1777.

Dreadful news indeed! You will see them partly in the papers, and we have not yet any particulars. An English army of nearly

ten thousand men laid down their arms and surrendered prisoners of war, on condition of being sent to England and of never serving against America. They had fought bravely, and were three days without eating. Burgoyne is said to have received three wounds. General Fraser, with two thousand men, killed. Colonel Acland likewise killed. A general cry for peace. Adieu. We have constant late days.

No. XCVI.

The Same to the Same.

February 28, 1778.

. . . . . As to politics, we should easily fill pages, and therefore had better be silent. You are mistaken in supposing that the Bills are opposed; some particular objections have been stated, and in the only division I voted with Government.

No. XCVII.

The Same to the Same.

February 23, 1778.

You do not readily believe in preternatural miscarriages of letters; nor I neither. Listen, however, to a plain and honest narrative. This morning after breakfast, as I was ruminating on your silence, Thomas, my new footman, with confusion in his looks and stammering on his tongue, produced a letter reasonably soiled, which he was to have brought me the day of his arrival, and which had lain forgotten from that time in his pocket. To shorten as much as possible the continuance, I immediately inquired whether any method of conveyance could be devised more expeditious than the post, and was fortunately informed of your coachman's intentions. You probably know the heads of the plan: an Act of Parliament to declare that we never had any intention of taxing America; another Act to empower the Crown to name Commissioners authorised to suspend hostilities by sea and land, as well as all obnoxious Acts; and, in short, to grant

everything except independence. Opposition, after expressing their doubts whether the lance of Achilles could cure the wound which it had inflicted, could not refuse their assent to the principles of conduct which they themselves had always recommended. Yet you must acknowledge that in a business of this magnitude there may arise several important questions which, without a spirit of faction, will deserve to be debated: whether Parliament ought not to name the Commissioners; whether it would not be better to repeal the obnoxious Acts ourselves. I do not find that the world—that is, a few people whom I happen to converse with—are much inclined to praise Lord N.'s ductility of temper. In the service of next Friday you will, however, take notice of the injunction given by the Liturgy: "And all the people shall say after the minister, Turn us again, O Lord, and so shall we be turned." While we consider whether we shall negotiate, I fear the French have been more diligent. It is positively asserted, both in private and in Parliament, and not contradicted by the Ministers, that on the 5th of this month a Treaty of Commerce, which naturally leads to a war, was signed at Paris with the independent States of America. Yet there still remains a hope that England may obtain the preference. The two greatest countries in Europe are fairly running a race for the favour of America. Adieu.

No. XCVIII.

The Same to the Same.

ALMACK'S, *Saturday night, March* 21, 1778.

As business thickens, and you may expect me to write sometimes, I shall lay down one rule—totally to avoid political argument, conjecture, lamentation, declamation, &c., which would fill pages, not to say volumes; and to confine myself to short, authentic pieces of intelligence, for which I may be able to afford moments and lines. Hear, then:—The French Ambassador went off yesterday morning, not without some slight expressions of ill-humour from John Bull. Lord Stormont is probably arrived

to-day. No immediate declaration, except on our side. A report (but vague) of an action in the Bay between La Motte Piquet and Digby; the former has five ships and three frigates, with three large store-ships under convoy; the latter has eleven ships of the line. If the Frenchman should sail to the mouth of the Delaware, he may possibly be followed and shut up. When Franklin was received at Versailles, Deane went in the same character to Vienna, and Arthur Lee to Madrid. Notwithstanding the reports of an action in Silesia, they subside; and I have seen a letter from Eliot at Berlin of the 10th instant, without any mention of actual hostilities, and even speaking of the impending war as not absolutely inevitable. Last Tuesday the first payment of the loan of six hundred thousand pounds was certainly made; and as it would otherwise be forfeited, it is a security for the remainder. I have not yet got the intelligence you want about former prices of stock in critical times. There are surely such. *Dixi. Vale.* Send me some good news from Bucks; in spite of the war, I must sell. We want you in town. Simon Fraser is impatient; but if you come without my lady every door will be shut.

No. XCIX.

The Same to the Same.

ALMACK'S, *Friday, June* 12, 1778.

——'s letter gave me that sort of satisfaction which one may receive from a good physician who, after a careful examination, pronounces your case incurable. But no more of that. I take up the pen, as I suppose by this time you begin to swear at my silence. Yet literally (a bull) I have not a word to say. Since D'Estaing's fleet has passed through the Gut (I leave you to guess where it must have got out) it has been totally forgotten, and the most wonderful lethargy and oblivion, of war and peace, of Europe and of America, seems to prevail. Lord Chatham's funeral was meanly attended, and Government ingeniously contrived to secure the double odium of suffering the thing to be

done and of doing it with an ill grace. Their chief conversation at Almack's is about tents, drill-sergeants, subdivisions, firings, &c., and I am revered as a veteran. Adieu. When do you return? If it suits your evolutions, Aunt Kitty and myself meditate a Sussex journey next week. I embrace my lady.

No. C.

The Same to the Same.

Wednesday evening, July 1, 1778.

Your plan of operations is clear and distinct; yet, notwithstanding your zeal and the ideas of ducal discipline, I think you will be more and longer at Sheffield Place than you imagine. However, I am disposed to advance my journey as much as possible. I want to see you; my martial ardour makes me look to Coxheath, necessity obliges me to think of Beriton, and I feel something of a very new inclination to taste the sweets of the country. Aunt Kitty shares the same sentiments; but various obstacles will not allow us to be with you before Saturday, or perhaps Sunday evening. I say evening, as we mean to take the cool part of the day, and shall probably arrive after supper. Keppel's return has occasioned infinite and inexpressible consternation, which gradually changes into discontent against him. He is ordered out again with three or four large ships—two of ninety, two of seventy-four—and the 50th Regiment, as marines. In the meantime the French, with a superior fleet, are masters of the sea, and our outward-bound East and West India trade is in the most imminent danger. Adieu.

No. CI.

The Same to the Same.

Bentinck Street, *July* 7, 1778.

Expect me——when you see me, and do not regulate your active motions by my uncertainty. Saturday is impossible. The

most probable days are Tuesday or Friday. I live not unpleasantly, in a round of Ministerial dinners; but I am rather impatient to see my white house at Brighton. I cannot find that Sheffield has the same attractions for you.[1] Lord North, as a mark of his gratitude, observed the other day that your regiment would make a very good figure in North Carolina. Adieu. I wrote two lines to Mitchel, lest he should think me dead.

No. CII.

The Same to the Same.

Saturday night, September 25, 1778.

No news from the fleets; we are so tired of waiting, that our impatience seems gradually to subside into a careless and supine indifference. We sometimes yawn, and ask, just by way of conversation, whether Spain will join. I believe you may depend on the truth, not the sincerity, of an answer from their Court, that they will not support or acknowledge the independence of the Americans. But, on the other hand, magazines are forming, troops marching, in a style which manifestly threatens Gibraltar. Gib is, however, a hard morsel; five thousand effectives, and every article of defence in the most complete state. We are certainly courting Russia. So much for the Republic. Adieu.

No. CIII.

The Same to the Same.

Tuesday night, November 1778.

You sometimes complain that I do not send you early news, but you will now be satisfied with receiving a full and true account of all the Parliamentary transactions of next Thursday. In town we think it an excellent piece of humour;[2] the author is Tickell. Burke and C. Fox are pleased with their own speeches,

[1] Mr. Holroyd was then in quarters at Brighthelmstone.

[2] The title of the pamphlet—*Anticipation.*

but serious patriots groan that such things should be turned to farce. We seem to have a chance of an additional Dutch war: you may depend upon its being a very important business, from which we cannot extricate ourselves without either loss or shame. Vale.

No. CIV.

The Same to the Same.

ALMACK'S, *Wednesday evening*, 1778.

I delayed writing, not so much through indolence as because I expected every post to hear from you. The state of Beriton is uncertain, incomprehensible, tremendous. It would be endless to send you the folios of Hugonin, but I have enclosed you one of his most picturesque epistles, on which you may meditate. Few offers. One, promising enough, came from a gentleman at Camberwell. I detected him, with masterly skill and diligence, to be only an attorney's clerk, without money, credit, or experience. I have written as yet in vain to Sir John Shelley about Hearsay; perhaps you might get intelligence. I much fear that the Beriton expedition is necessary; but it has occurred to me that if I met instead of accompanying you, it would save me a journey of above one hundred miles. That reflection led to another of a very impudent nature—viz., that if I did not accompany you I certainly could be of no use to you or myself on the spot; that I had much rather, while you examined the premises, pass the time in a horse-pond; and that I had still rather pass it in my library with the Decline and Fall. But that would be an effort of friendship worthy of Theseus or Pirithous; modern times would hardly credit, much less imitate, such exalted virtue. No news from America; yet there are people, large ones too, who talk of conquering it next summer with the help of twenty thousand Russians. I fancy you are better satisfied with private than public war. The Lisbon packet in coming home met above forty of our privateers. Adieu. I hardly know whether I direct right to you, but I think Sheffield Place the surest.

No. CV.

Dr. WATSON (*now* Bishop of Llandaff) *to* Mr. GIBBON.

CAMBRIDGE, *January* 14, 1779.

SIR,—It will give me the greatest pleasure to have an opportunity of becoming better acquainted with Mr. Gibbon. I beg he would accept my sincere thanks for the too favourable manner in which he has spoken of a performance which derives its chief merit from the elegance and importance of the work it attempts to oppose. I have no hope of a future existence except that which is grounded on the truth of Christianity. I wish not to be deprived of this hope; but I should be an apostate from the mild principle of the religion I profess if I could be actuated with the least animosity against those who do not think with me upon this, of all others, the most important subject. I beg your pardon for this declaration of my belief; but my temper is naturally open, and it ought assuredly to be without disguise to a man whom I wish no longer to look upon as an antagonist, but as a friend.—I have the honour to be, with every sentiment of respect, your obliged servant.

No. CVI.

EDWARD GIBBON, Esq., *to* J. B. HOLROYD, Esq.

February 6, 1779.

You are quiet and peaceable, and do not bark, as usual, at my silence. To reward you I would send you some news, but we are asleep; no foreign intelligence, except the capture of a frigate; no certain account from the West Indies, and a dissolution of Parliament, which seems to have taken place since Christmas. In the papers you will see negotiations, changes of departments, &c., and I have some reason to believe that those reports are not entirely without foundation. Portsmouth is no longer an object of speculation; the whole stream of all men and all parties runs one way. Sir Hugh is disgraced, ruined, &c. &c.;

and as an old wound has broken out again, they say he must have his leg cut off as soon as he has time. In a night or two we shall be in a blaze of illumination from the zeal of naval heroes, land patriots, and tallow-chandlers; the last are not the least sincere. I want to hear some details of your military and familiar proceedings. By your silence I suppose you admire Davis and dislike my pamphlet; yet such is the public folly that we have a second edition in the press. The fashionable style of the clergy is to say they have not read it. If Maria does not take care I shall write a much sharper invective against her for not answering my diabolical book. My lady carried it down, with a solemn promise that I should receive an unassisted French letter. Yet I embrace the little animal, as well as my lady and the *Spes altera Romæ*. Adieu.

There is a buzz about a peace and Spanish mediation.

No. CVII.

The Same to the Same.

May 7, 1779.

By some of the strangest accidents (Lord G. G.'s indiscretion, Rigby's boldness, &c.), which it would require ten pages to explain, our wise resolution of last Thursday is changed, and Lord Cornwallis will be examined; Sir William Howe's inquiry will proceed, and we shall be oppressed by the load of information. You have heard of the Jersey invasion; everybody praises Arbuthnot's decided spirit. Conway went last night to throw himself into the island.

No. CVIII.

The Same to the Same.

May 1779.

Alas! alas! fourteen ships of the line. You understand by this that you have not got a single long-boat. Ministry are more crestfallen than I ever knew them with the last intelligence, and I

am sorry to say that I see a smile of triumph on some Opposition faces. Though the business of the West Indies may still produce something, I am much afraid that we shall have a campaign of immense expense and little or no action. The most busy scene is at present in the House of Commons, and we shall be involved during a great part of next month in tedious, fruitless, but, in my opinion, proper inquiries. You see how difficult it would be for me to visit Brighton, and I fancy I must content myself with receiving you on your passage to Ireland. Indeed, I much want to have a very serious conversation with you. Another reason which must in a great measure pin me to Bentinck Street is the Decline and Fall. I have resolved to bring out the suite in the course of next year, and though I have been tolerably diligent, so much remains to be done that I can hardly spare a single day from the shop. I can guess but one reason which should prevent you from supposing that the picture in Leicester Fields was intended for the Sheffield library, viz., my having told you some time ago that I was under a formal engagement to Mr. Walpole.[1] Probably I should not have been in any great hurry to execute my promise if Mr. Cadell had not strenuously urged the curiosity of the public, who may be willing to repay the exorbitant price of fifty guineas. It is now finished, and my friends say that, in every sense of the word, it is a good head. Next week it will be given to Hall the engraver, and I promise you a first impression. Adieu. I embrace my lady and infants.

No. CIX.

The Same to the Same.

1779.

When do you come to town? You gave me hopes of a visit, and I want to talk over things in general with you before you march to the extremities of the West, where the sun goes to sleep in the sea. Mrs. Trevor told me your destination was Exeter,[2] and I suppose nothing but truth can proceed from a pretty mouth.

[1] The portrait, one of the best of Sir Joshua's, is in the library at Sheffield Place.
[2] With the Sussex militia, of which Mr. Holroyd was major.

I have been, and am still, very diligent, and though it is a huge beast, the Roman Empire, yet, if I am not mistaken, I see it move a little. You seem surprised that I was able to get off Bath. Very easily; the extreme shortness of our holidays was a fair excuse; her recovery of health, spirits, &c., made it less necessary, and she accepted my apology, which was, however, accompanied with an offer, if she chose it, in the prettiest manner possible. A load of business in this House (I write from it) will be the amusement of the spring; motions, inquiries, taxes, &c. &c. We are now engaged in Lord Pigott's affair, brought on by a motion from the Admiral that the Attorney-General should prosecute Mr. Stratton and Council. All the Masters—Charles, Burke, Wedderburne—are of the same side, for it; Lord North seems to make a feeble stand for the pleasure of being in a minority. The day is hot and dull; will be long. Some curious evidence; one man who refused three lacs of rupees (thirty-seven thousand five hundred pounds) merely not to go to Council. Our mouths watered at such royal corruption. How pitiful is our insular bribery! A letter from Aunt Hester. Adieu.

No. CX.

The Same to the Same.

July 2, 1779.

The enclosed will inform you of an event[1] not the most disagreeable of those which I have lately experienced. I have only to add that it was effected by the firm and sincere friendship of the Attorney-General. So many incidents have happened that I hardly know how to talk of news. You will learn that the Lords have strangely castrated the new Militia Bill. The Ferrol squadron, eight or nine ships, have joined the French. The numbers stand, on our side thirty-two, on theirs thirty-seven; but our force is at least equal, and the general consternation much dispelled. If you do not Hibernise, you might at least Bentinckise. I embrace, &c. Parliament will be prorogued to-morrow.

[1] His appointment as Lord of Trade.

No. CXI.

EDWARD GIBBON, Esq., *to* Mrs. GIBBON, Bath.

BENTINCK STREET, *September* 17, 1779.

DEAR MADAM,—I am well and happy—two words which you will accept as the substance of a very long letter, and even as a sufficient excuse for a very long silence. Yet I really do intend to behave better; and to prevent the abominable consequence of hours and days and posts stealing away, till the sum-total amounts to a formidable account, I have a great mind to enter into an agreement of sending you regularly every month a miniature picture of my actual state and condition on the first day of the aforesaid month.

I am glad to hear of the very beneficial effects you have derived from your recent friendship with the goats;[1] and as I cannot discover in what respect this poor country is more prosperous or secure than it was last year, I must consider your present confidence as a proof that you view the prospect through a purer medium and a glass of a more cheerful colour. I find myself so much more susceptible of private friendship than of public spirit that I am very well satisfied with that conclusion. My summer has been passed in the town and neighbourhood, which I still maintain to be the best society and the best retirement; the latter, however, has been sometimes interrupted by the colonel of dragoons[2] with a train of sergeants, trumpets, recruits, &c. &c. My own time is much and agreeably employed in the prosecution of my business. After doing much more than I expected to have done within the time, I find myself much less advanced than I expected; yet I begin to reckon, and, as well as I can calculate, I believe that in twelve or fourteen months I shall be brought to bed, perhaps of twins. May they live, and prove as healthy as their eldest brother. With regard to the little foundling which so many friends or enemies chose to lay at my door, I am perfectly

[1] At Abergavenny.

[2] Colonel Holroyd at that time was raising a regiment of light dragoons.

innocent even of the knowledge of that production; and all the faults or merits of the History of Opposition must, as I am informed, be imputed to Macpherson, the author or translator of Fingal.—Dear Madam, most truly yours.

No. CXII.

EDWARD GIBBON, Esq., *to* Colonel HOLROYD, at Coventry.

LONDON, *Monday, February* 7, 1780.

When the Attorney-General informed me of the express he had just sent down to Coventry, I had not the least doubt of your embracing the bolder resolution. You are indeed obliged to him for his real friendship, which he feels and expresses warmly; on this occasion I hope it will be successful, and that in a few days you will find yourself among us at St. Stephen's in the heat of the battle. But you know that I am a dastardly, pusillanimous spirit, more inclined to fear than to hope, and not very eager in the pursuit of expensive vanity. On this vacancy the celerity of your motions may probably prevent opposition; but at the General Election your enemy the Corporation will not be asleep, and I wish, if it be not too late, to warn you against any promises or engagements which may terminate in a defeat, or at least a contest of ten thousand pounds. Adieu. I could believe, without seeing it under her paw, that my lady wishes to leave Coventry. No news, foreign or domestic. I did not forget to mention the companies, but find people, as I expected, torpid. Burke makes his motion Friday; but I think the rumours of a civil war subside every day. Petitions are thought less formidable, and I hear your Sussex protest gathers signatures in the country.

No. CXIII.

EDWARD GIBBON, Esq., *to* Mrs. GIBBON, Bath.

BENTINCK STREET, *March* 10, 1780.

DEAR MADAM,—When you awakened me with your pen, it was my intention to have shown some signs of life by the next post.

But so uncertain are all human affairs, that I found myself arrested by a mighty, unrelenting tyrant, called the gout; and though my feet were the part on which he chose to exercise his cruelty, he left me neither strength nor spirits to use my hand in relating the melancholy tale. At present I have the pleasure of informing you that the fever and inflammation have subsided; but the absolute weakness and monstrous swelling of my two feet confine me to my chair and flannels; and this confinement most unluckily happens at a very nice and important moment of Parliamentary affairs. Col. H. pursues those affairs with eager and persevering zeal, and has the pleasure of undertaking more business than any three men could possibly execute. He is much obliged to you for your kind congratulation. Mrs. Eliot is in town, but I am quite ignorant (not more so than they are themselves) of their intentions. I will write again very soon.—I am, dear Madam, most truly yours.

No. CXIV.

The Same to the Same.

June 6, 1780.

DEAR MADAM,—As the old story of religion has raised most formidable tumults in this town, and as they will, of course, seem much more formidable at the distance of an hundred miles, you may not be sorry to hear that I am perfectly safe and well; my known attachment to the Protestant religion has most probably saved me. Measures, and effectual measures, are taken to suppress those disorders, and every street is filled with horse and foot. Mrs. Holroyd went out of town yesterday morning; the Colonel remains, and shows his usual spirit.—I am sincerely yours.

No. CXV.

The Same to the Same.

LONDON, *June* 8, 1780.

DEAR MADAM,—As a Member of Parliament, I cannot be exposed to any danger, since the House of Commons has ad-

journed to Monday se'nnight; as an individual, I do not conceive myself to be obnoxious. I am not apt, without duty or necessity, to thrust myself into a mob, and our part of the town is as quiet as a country village. So much for personal safety; but I cannot give the same assurances of public tranquillity. Forty thousand Puritans, such as they might be in the time of Cromwell, have started out of their graves; the tumult has been dreadful, and even the remedy of military force and martial law is unpleasant. But Government, with fifteen thousand regulars in town and every gentleman but one on their side, must extinguish the flame. The execution of last night was severe; perhaps it must be repeated to-night; yet, upon the whole, the tumult subsides. Colonel Holroyd was all last night in Holborn among the flames, with the Northumberland Militia, and performed very bold and able service. I will write again in a post or two.—I am, dear Madam, ever yours.

No. CXVI.

The Same to the Same.

June 10, 1780.

DEAR MADAM,—I should write with great pleasure to say that this audacious tumult is perfectly quelled, that Lord George Gordon is sent to the Tower, and that, instead of safety or danger, we are now at leisure to think of justice; but I am now alarmed on your account, as we have just got a report that a similar disorder has broken out at Bath. I shall be impatient to hear from you, but I flatter myself that your pretty town does not contain much of that scum which has boiled up to the surface in this huge caldron.—I am, dear Madam, most sincerely yours.

No. CXVII.

The Same to the Same.

BENTINCK STREET, *June* 27, 1780.

DEAR MADAM,—I believe we may now rejoice in our common security. All tumult has perfectly subsided, and we only think of

the justice which must be properly and severely inflicted on such flagitious criminals. The measures of Government have been seasonable and vigorous, and even Opposition has been forced to confess that the military power was applied and regulated with the utmost propriety. Our danger is at an end, but our disgrace will be lasting, and the month of June 1780 will ever be marked by a dark and diabolical fanaticism which I had supposed to be extinct, but which actually subsists in Great Britain perhaps beyond any other country in Europe. Our Parliamentary work draws to a conclusion, and I am much more pleasingly, though laboriously, engaged in revising and correcting for the press the continuation of my History, two volumes of which will certainly appear next winter. This business fixes me to Bentinck Street more closely than any other part of my literary labour, as it is absolutely necessary that I should be in the midst of all the books which I have at any time used during the composition. But I feel a strong desire, irritated, like all other passions, by repeated obstacles, to escape to Bath.—Dear Madam, most truly yours.

No. CXVIII.

EDWARD GIBBON, Esq., *to* Colonel HOLROYD.

July 25, 1780.

As your motions are spontaneous, and the stations of the Lord Chief[1] unalterably fixed, I cannot perceive the necessity of your sending or receiving intelligence. However, your commands are obeyed. You wish I would write, as a sign of life. I am alive; but, as I am immersed in the Decline and Fall, I shall only make the sign. It is made. You may suppose that we are not pleased with the junction of the fleets, nor can an ounce of West India loss be compensated by a pound of East India success; but the circuit will roll down all the news and politics of London. I rejoice to hear that the Sussex regiment of dragoons[2] are such well-disciplined cannibals; but I want to know when the chief cannibal will return to his den. It would suit me better that it should happen soon. Adieu.

[1] Lord Mansfield. [2] Commanded by Colonel Holroyd.

No. CXIX.

The Same to the Same.

BROOKES'S, *November* 28, 1780.

Perhaps the sheriffs,[1] the tools of your enemies, may venture to make a false and hostile return, on the presumption that they shall have a whole year of impunity, and that the merits of your petition cannot be heard this session. Some of your most respectable friends in the House of Commons are resolved, if the return should be such, to state it forcibly as a special and extraordinary case; and to exert all proper strength for bringing on the trial of your petition without delay. The knowledge of such a resolution may awe the sheriffs; and it may be prudent to admonish them of the impending danger in the way that you judge most advisable. Adieu. God send you a good deliverance.

No. CXX.

Mr. GIBBON *to* Mrs. GIBBON, Belvedere, Bath.

BENTINCK STREET, *December* 21, 1780.

DEAR MADAM,—The constant attendance on the Board of Trade almost every day this week has obliged me to defer till next Monday a visit of inclination and propriety to Lord Loughborough at Mitcham, in Surrey. I shall not return till Wednesday or Thursday, and, instead of my Christmas, I shall eat my New Year's dinner at the Belvedere, Bath. May that New Year prove fortunate to you, to me, and to this weary country, which is this day involved in a new war. I shall write again about the middle of next week, with a precise account of my motions. I think the gallant Colonel, who is now Lord Sheffield, will succeed at Coventry; perhaps on the return, certainly on the petition.—I am, dear Madam, ever yours.

[1] The sheriffs of Coventry.

No. CXXI.

The Same to the Same, Bath.

BENTINCK STREET, *February* 24, 1781.

DEAR MADAM,—As you have probably received my last letter of thirteen hundred pages,[1] I shall be very concise; read, judge, pronounce, and believe that I sincerely agree with my friend Julian in esteeming the praise of those only who will freely censure my defects. Next Thursday I shall be delivered to the world, for whose inconstant and malicious levity I am coolly but firmly prepared. Excuse me to Sarah. I see more clearly than ever the absolute necessity of confining my presents to my own family; that, and that only, is a determined line, and Lord S. is the first to approve his exclusion. He has a strong assurance of success, and some hopes of a speedy decision. How suddenly your friend, General Pierson, disappeared! You thought him happy. What is happiness?—My dear Madam, ever yours.

No. CXXII.

Dr. WILLIAM ROBERTSON *to* Mr. GIBBON.

COLLEGE OF EDINBURGH, *May* 12, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—I am ashamed of having deferred so long to thank you for the agreeable presents of your two new volumes, but just as I had finished the first reading of them I was taken ill, and continued, for two or three weeks, nervous, deaf, and languid. I have now recovered as much spirit as to tell you with what perfect satisfaction I have not only perused but studied this part of your work. I knew enough of your talents and industry to expect a great deal, but you have gone far beyond my expectations. I can recollect no historical work from which I ever received so much instruction; and when I consider in what a barren field you had to glean and pick up materials, I am truly astonished at the connected and interesting story you have

[1] Second and third volumes of the Decline and Fall.

formed. I like the style of these volumes better than that of the first; there is the same beauty, richness, and perspicuity of language, with less of that quaintness into which your admiration of Tacitus sometimes seduced you. I am highly pleased with the reign of Julian. I was a little afraid that you might lean with some partiality towards him; but even bigots, I should think, must allow that you have delineated his most singular character with a more masterly hand than ever touched it before. You set me a-reading his works, with which I was very slenderly acquainted; and I am much struck with the felicity wherewith you have described that odd infusion of heathen fanaticism and philosophical coxcombry which mingled with the great qualities of a hero and a genius. Your chapter concerning the pastoral nations is admirable; and though I hold myself to be a tolerably good general historian, a great part of it was new to me. As soon as I have leisure I purpose to trace you to your sources of information, and I have no doubt of finding you as exact there as I have found you in other passages where I have made a scrutiny. It was always my idea that a historian should feel himself a witness giving evidence upon oath. I am glad to perceive by your minute scrupulosity that your notions are the same. The last chapter in your work is the only one with which I am not entirely satisfied. I imagine you rather anticipate in describing the jurisprudence and institutions of the Franks, and should think that the account of private war, ordeals, chivalry, &c., would have come in more in its place about the age of Charlemagne or later; but with respect to this and some other petty criticisms I will have an opportunity of talking fully to you soon, as I propose setting out for London on Monday. I have, indeed, many things to say to you; and as my stay in London is to be very short, I shall hope to find your door, at which I will be very often, always open to me. I cannot conclude without approving of the caution with which the new volumes are written; I hope it will exempt you from the illiberal abuse the first volume drew upon you.—I ever am yours faithfully and affectionately.

No. CXXIII.

EDWARD GIBBON, Esq., *to* LADY SHEFFIELD, *at* Sheffield Place.

BENTINCK STREET, *Friday evening, ten o'clock*, 1781.

Oh, oh! I have given you the slip, saved thirty miles by proceeding this day directly from Eartham to town, and am now comfortably seated in my library, in my own easy-chair, and before my own fire—a style which you understand, though it is unintelligible to your lord. The town is empty, but I am surrounded with a thousand old acquaintance of all ages and characters, who are ready to answer a thousand questions which I am impatient to ask. I shall not easily be tired of their company; yet I still remember, and will honourably execute, my promise of visiting you at Brighton about the middle of next month. I have seen nobody nor learned anything in four hours of a town life, but I can inform you that Lady —— is now the declared mistress of Prince Henry of Prussia, whom she encountered at Spa, and that the Emperor has invited the amiable couple to pass the winter at Vienna—fine encouragement for married women who behave themselves properly. I spent a very pleasant day in the little paradise of Eartham, and the hermit expressed a desire—no vulgar compliment—to see and to know Lord S. Adieu. I cordially embrace, &c.

No. CXXIV.

Sir WILLIAM JONES *to* Mr. GIBBON.

LAMB'S BUILDINGS, *June* 30, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—I have more than once sought, without having been so fortunate as to obtain, a proper opportunity of thanking you very sincerely for the elegant compliment which you pay me in a work abounding in elegance of all kinds.

My Seven Arabian Poets will see the light before next winter, and be proud to wait upon you in their English dress. Their

wild productions will, I flatter myself, be thought interesting, and not venerable merely on account of their antiquity.

In the meanwhile let me request you to honour me with accepting a copy of a law tract which is not yet published; the subject is so generally important that I make no apology for sending you a professional work.

You must pardon my inveterate hatred of C. Octavianus, basely surnamed Augustus. I feel myself unable to forgive the death of Cicero, which, if he did not promote, he might have prevented. Besides, even Mecænas knew the cruelty of his disposition, and ventured to reproach him with it. In short, I have not Christian charity for him.

With regard to Asiatic letters, a necessary attention to my profession will compel me wholly and eternally to abandon them, unless Lord North, to whom I am already under no small obligation, should think me worthy to concur in the improved administration of justice in Bengal, and should appoint me to supply the vacancy on the India Bench. Were that appointment to take place this year, I should probably travel, for speed, through part of Egypt and Arabia, and should be able in my way to procure many Eastern tracts of literature and jurisprudence. I might become a good Mohammedan lawyer before I reach Calcutta, and in my vacations should find leisure to explain in my native language whatever the Arabs, Persians, and Turks have written on science, history, and the fine arts.

My happiness by no means depends on obtaining this appointment, as I am in easy circumstances without my profession, and have flattering prospects in it; but if the present summer and the ensuing autumn elapse without my receiving any answer, favourable or unfavourable, I shall be forced to consider that silence as a polite refusal, and having given sincere thanks for past favours, shall entirely drop all thoughts of Asia, and, "deep as ever plummet sounded, shall drown my Persian books." If my politics have given offence, it would be manly in Ministers to tell me so. I shall never be personally hostile to them, nor enlist under party banners of any colour, but I will never resign my

opinions for interest, though I would cheerfully abandon them on conviction. My reason, such as it is, can only be controlled by better reason, to which I am ever open. As to my freedom of thought, speech, and action, I shall ever say what Charles XII. wrote under the map of Riga, "*Dieu me l'a donnee; le diable ne me l'ôtera pas.*" But the fair answer to this objection is, that my system is purely speculative, and has no relation to my seat on the Bench in India, where I should hardly think of instructing the Gentoos in the maxims of the Athenians. I believe I should not have troubled you with this letter if I did not fear that your attendance in Parliament might deprive me of the pleasure of meeting you at the club next Tuesday; and I shall go to Oxford a few days after. At all times and in all places I shall ever be, with undissembled regard, dear Sir, your much obliged and faithful servant.

No. CXXV.

EDWARD GIBBON, Esq., *to* Mrs. GIBBON, Bath.

BRIGHTHELMSTONE, *November* 2, 1781.

DEAR MADAM,—I returned to this place with Lord and Lady Sheffield, with the design of passing two or three weeks in a situation which had so highly delighted me. But how vain are all sublunary hopes! I had forgot that there is some difference between the sunshine of August and the cold fogs (though we have uncommon good weather) of November. Instead of my beautiful sea-shore, I am confined to a dark lodging in the middle of the town; for the place is still full, and our time is now spent in the dull imitation of a London life. To complete my misfortunes, Lord Sheffield was hastily ordered to Canterbury and Deal to suppress some disturbances, and I was left almost alone with my lady, in the servile state of a married man. But he returns to-day, and I hope to be seated in my own library by the middle of next week. However, you will not be sorry to hear that I have refreshed myself by a very idle summer, and indeed a much idler and more pleasant winter than the House of Commons will ever

allow me to enjoy again. I had almost forgot Mr. Hayley; ungratefully enough, since I really passed a very simple but entertaining day with him. His place, though small, is elegant as his mind, which I value much more highly. Mrs. —— wrote a melancholy story of an American mother, a friend of her friend, who in a short time had lost three sons; one killed by the savages, one run mad from the fright at that accident, and the third taken at sea, now in England, a prisoner in Forton Hospital. For him something might perhaps be done. Your humanity will prompt you to obtain from Mrs. —— a more accurate account of names, dates, and circumstances; but you will prudently suppress my request, lest I should raise hopes which it may not be in my power to gratify. Lady S. begs to send her kindest compliments to you.—I am, dear Madam, ever yours.

No. CXXVI.

The Same to the Same, Bath.

July 3, 1782.

DEAR MADAM,—I hope you have not had a moment's uneasiness about the delay of my midsummer letter. Whatever may happen, you may rest fully secure that the materials of it shall always be found. But on this occasion I have missed four or five posts; postponing, as usual, from morning to the evening bell, which now rings, till it has occurred to me that it might not be amiss to enclose the two essential lines, if I only added that the influenza has been known to me only by the report of others. Lord Rockingham is at last dead; a good man, whatever he might be a Minister. His successor is not yet named, and divisions in the Cabinet are suspected. If Lord Shelburne should be the man, as I think he will, the friends of his predecessor will quarrel with him before Christmas. At all events, I foresee much tumult and strong opposition, from which I should be very glad to extricate myself by quitting the House of Commons with honour. Whatever you may hear, I believe there is not the least intention of dissolving Parliament, which would indeed be a rash and

dangerous measure. I hope you like Mr. Hayley's poem; he rises with his subject, and since Pope's death, I am satisfied that England has not seen so happy a mixture of strong sense and flowing numbers. Are you not delighted with his address to his mother? I understand that she was in plain prose everything that he speaks her in verse. This summer I shall stay in town and work at my trade till I make some holidays for my Bath excursion. Lady Sheffield is at Brighton, and he is under tents, like the wild Arabs; so that my country-house is shut up.—I am, dear Madam, ever yours.

No. CXXVII.

EDWARD GIBBON, Esq., *to the* Right Honourable LORD SHEFFIELD, Coxheath Camp.

BENTINCK STREET, 1782.

I sympathise with your fatigues; yet Alexander, Hannibal, &c., have suffered hardships almost equal to yours. At such a moment it is disagreeable, besides laziness, to write, because every hour teems with a new lie. As yet, however, only Charles has formally resigned; but Lord John,[1] Burke, Keppel, Lord Althorpe, &c., certainly follow; your Lord Lieutenant stays. In short, three months of prosperity has dissolved a phalanx which had stood ten years' adversity. Next Tuesday, Fox will give his reasons, and possibly be encountered by Pitt, the new Secretary, or Chancellor,[2] at three-and-twenty. The day will be rare and curious, and if I were a light dragoon I would take a gallop on purpose to Westminster. Adieu. I hear the bell. How could I write before I knew where you dwelt?

No. CXXVIII.

The Same to the Same, Coxheath Camp.

September 29, 1782.

I should like to hear sometimes whether you survive the scenes of action and danger in which a dragoon is continually involved.

[1] Lord John Cavendish. [2] Chancellor of the Exchequer.

What a difference between the life of a dragoon and that of a philosopher! And I will freely own that I, the philosopher, am much better satisfied with my own independent and tranquil situation, in which I have always something to do, without ever being obliged to do anything. The Hampton Court villa has answered my expectation, and proved no small addition to my comforts; so that I am resolved next summer to hire, borrow, or steal either the same or something of the same kind. Every morning I walk a mile or more before breakfast, read and write *quantum sufficit*, mount my chaise and visit in the neighbourhood, accept some invitations and escape others, use the Lucans as my daily bread, dine pleasantly at home or sociably abroad, reserve for study an hour or two in the evening, lie in town regularly once a week, &c. &c. &c. I have announced to Mrs. G. my new arrangements, the certainty that October will be fine, and my increasing doubts whether I shall be able to reach Bath before Christmas. Do you intend (but how can you intend anything?) to pass the winter under canvas? Perhaps under the veil of Hampton Court I may lurk ten days or a fortnight at Sheffield, if the enraged lady does not shut the doors against me. The Warden[1] passed through in his way to Dover. He is not so fat, and more cheerful than ever. I had not any private conversation with him, but he clearly holds the balance, unless he lets it drop out of his hand. The Pandemonium, as I understand, does not meet till the 26th of November. Town is more a desert than I ever knew it. I arrived yesterday, dined at Sir Joshua's with a tolerable party; the chaise is now at the door. I dine at Richmond, lie at Hampton, &c. Adieu.

No. CXXIX.

The Same to the Same.

BENTINCK STREET, *October* 14, 1782.

On the approach of winter my paper house at Hampton becomes less comfortable, my visits to Bentinck Street grow longer

[1] Lord North.

and more frequent, and the end of next week will restore me to the town, with a lively wish, however, to repeat the same, or a similar, experiment next summer. I admire the assurance with which you propose a month's residence at Sheffield, when you are not sure of being allowed three days. Here it is currently reported that camps will not separate till Lord Howe's return from Gibraltar, and as yet we have no news of his arrival. Perhaps, indeed, you may have more intimate correspondence with your old friend Lord Shelburne, and already know the hour of your deliverance. I should like to be informed. As Lady S. has entirely forgotten me, I shall have the pleasure of forming a new acquaintance. I have often thought of writing, but it is now too late to repent.

I am at a loss what to say or think about our Parliamentary state. A certain late Secretary of Ireland reckons the House of Commons thus: Minister 140, Reynard 90, Boreas 120, the rest unknown or uncertain. The last of the three, by self or agents, talks too much of absence, neutrality, moderation. I still think he will discard the game.

I am not in such a fury with the letter of American independence, but I think it seems ill-timed and useless, and I am much entertained with the metaphysical disputes between Government and Secession about the meaning of it. Lord Loughborough will be in town Sunday se'nnight. I long to see him and co. I think he will take a very decided part. If he could throw aside his gown he would make a noble leader. The East India news are excellent. The French gone to the Mauritius, Heyder desirous of peace, the Nizam and Mahrattas our friends, and seventy lacs of rupees in the Bengal treasury, while we were voting the recall of Hastings. Adieu. Write soon.

No. CXXX.

The Same to the Same.

1782.

I have designed writing every post. The air of London is admirable; my complaints have vanished, and the gout still

respects me. Lord Loughborough, with whom I passed an entire day, is very well satisfied with his Irish expedition, and found the barbarous people very kind to him. The castle is strong, but the volunteers are formidable. London is dead, and all intelligence so totally extinct that the loss of an army would be a favourable incident. We have not even the advantage of shipwrecks, which must soon, with the society of you and Gerard Hamilton, become the only pleasures of Brighton. My lady is precious, and deserves to shine in London when she regains her palace. The workmen are slow, but I hear that the Minister talks of hiring another house after Christmas.[1] Adieu till Monday se'nnight.

No. CXXXI.

The Same to the Same.

January 17, 1783.

As I arrived about seven o'clock on Wednesday last, we were some time in town in mutual ignorance. Unlucky enough; yet our loss will be speedily repaired. Your reason for not writing is worthy of an Irish Baron. You thought Sarah might be at Bath, because you directed letters to her at Clifton, near Bristol, where, indeed, I saw her in a delightful situation, swept by the winter winds and scorched by the summer sun. A nobler reason for your silence would be the care of the public papers to record your steps, words, and actions. I was pleased with your Coventry oration; a panegyric on —— is a subject entirely new, and which no orator before yourself would have dared to undertake. You have acted with prudence and dignity in casting away the military yoke. This next summer you will sit down, if you can sit, in the long-lost character of a country gentleman.

For my own part, my late journey has only confirmed me in the opinion that No. 7 Bentinck Street is the best house in the world. I find that peace and war alternately, and daily, take their turns of conversation, and this, Friday, is the pacific day.

[1] Lord North, while his house was repairing, inhabited Lord Shefficld's in Downing Street.

Next week we shall probably hear some questions on that head very strongly asked and very foolishly answered, &c. Give me a line by return of post, and probably I may visit Downing Street on Monday evening; late, however, as I am engaged to dinner and cards. Adieu.

No. CXXXII.

The Same to the Same.

July 10, 1783.

You will read the following lines with more patience and attention than you would probably give to an hasty conference, perpetually interrupted by the opening of the door, and perhaps by the quickness of our own tempers. I neither expect nor desire an answer on a subject of extreme importance to myself, but which friendship alone can render interesting to you. We shall soon meet at Sheffield.

It is needless to repeat the reflections which we have sometimes debated together, and which I have often seriously weighed in my silent solitary walks. Notwithstanding your active and ardent spirit, you must allow that there is some perplexity in my present situation, and that my future prospects are distant and cloudy. I have lived too long in the world to entertain a very sanguine idea of the friendship or zeal of Ministerial patrons, and we are all sensible how much the powers of patronage are reduced. . . . . .

. . . . . .

At the end of the Parliament, or rather long before that time (for their lives are not worth a year's purchase), our Ministers are kicked downstairs, and I am left their disinterested friend, to fight through another Opposition and to expect the fruits of another revolution. But I will take a more favourable supposition, and conceive myself in six months firmly seated at the Board of Customs; before the end of the next six months I should infallibly hang myself. Instead of regretting my disappointment, I rejoice in my escape, as I am satisfied that no salary could pay me for the irksomeness of attendance and the

drudgery of business so repugnant to my taste and, I will dare to say, so unworthy of my character. Without looking forward to the possibility, still more remote, of exchanging that laborious office for a smaller annuity, there is surely another plan, more reasonable, more simple, and more pleasant—a temporary retreat to a quiet and less expensive scene. In a four years' residence at Lausanne I should live within my income, save, and even accumulate, my ready money; finish my History, an object of profit as well as fame, expect the contingencies of elderly lives, and return to England at the age of fifty, to form a lasting independent establishment, without courting the smiles of a Minister or apprehending the downfall of a party. Such have been my serious, sober reflections. Yet I much question whether I should have found courage to follow my reason and my inclination if a friend had not stretched his hand to draw me out of the dirt. The 20th of last May I wrote to my friend Deyverdun, after a long interval of silence, to expose my situation and to consult in what manner I might best arrange myself at Lausanne. From his answer, which I received about a fortnight ago, I have the pleasure to learn that his heart and his house are both open for my reception, that a family which he had lodged for some years is about to leave him, and that at no other time my company could have been so acceptable and convenient. I shall step, at my arrival, into an excellent apartment and a delightful situation; the fair division of our expenses will render them very moderate, and I shall pass my time with the companion of my youth, whose temper and studies have always been congenial to my own. I have given him my word of honour to be at Lausanne in the beginning of October, and no power or persuasion can divert me from this irrevocable resolution, which I am every day proceeding to execute.

I wish, but I scarcely hope, to convince you of the propriety of my scheme; but at least you will allow that, when we are not able to prevent the follies of our friends, we should strive to render them as easy and harmless as possible. The arrangement of my house, furniture, and books will be left to meaner hands,

but it is to your zeal and judgment alone I can trust the more important disposal of Lenborough and . . . . . On these subjects we may go into a committee at Sheffield Place, but you know it is the rule of a committee not to hear any arguments against the principle of the Bill. At present I shall only observe that neither of these negotiations ought to detain me here; the former may be despatched as well, the latter much better, in my absence. Vale.

No. CXXXIII.

The Same to the Same.

Monday, August 18, 1783.

In the preparation of my journey I have not felt any circumstance more deeply than the kind concern of Lady Sheffield and the silent grief of Mrs. Porten. Yet the age of my friends makes a very essential difference. I can scarcely hope ever to see my aunt again; but I flatter myself that in less than two years my sister will make me a visit, and that in less than four I shall return it with a cheerful heart at Sheffield Place. Business advances. This morning my books were shipped for Rouen, and will reach Lausanne almost as soon as myself. On Thursday morning the bulk of the library moves from Bentinck Street to Downing Street. I shall escape from the noise to Hampton Court, and spend three or four days in taking leave. I want to know your precise motions, what day you arrived in town, whether you visit Lord —— before the races, &c. I am now impatient to be gone, and shall only wait for a last interview with you. Your medley of judges, advocates, politicians, &c., is rather useful than pleasant. Town is a vast solitude. Adieu.

No. CXXXIV.

The Same to the Same.

BENTINCK STREET, *August* 20, 1783.

I am now concluding one of the most unpleasant days of my life. Will the day of our meeting again be accompanied with

proportionable satisfaction? The business of preparation will serve to agitate and divert my thoughts; but I do not like your brooding over melancholy ideas in your solitude, and I heartily wish that both you and my dear Lady S. would immediately go over and pass a week at Brighton. Such is our imperfect nature that dissipation is a far more efficacious remedy than reflection. At all events, let me hear from you soon. I have passed the evening at home without gaining any intelligence.

No. CXXXV.

The Same to the Same.

LAUSANNE, *September* 30, 1783.

I arrived safe in harbour last Saturday, the 27th instant, about ten o'clock in the morning; but as the post only goes out twice a week, it was not in my power to write before this day. Except one day, between Langres and Besançon, which was laborious enough, I finished my easy and gentle airing without any fatigue either of mind or body. I found Deyverdun well and happy, but much more happy at the sight of a friend and the accomplishment of a scheme which he had so long and impatiently desired. His garden, terrace, and park have even exceeded the most sanguine of my expectations and remembrances; and you yourself cannot have forgotten the charming prospect of the lake, the mountains, and the declivity of the Pays de Vaud. But as human life is perpetually chequered with good and evil, I have found some disappointments on my arrival. The easy nature of Deyverdun, his indolence and his impatience, had prompted him to reckon too positively that his house would be vacant at Michaelmas; some unforeseen difficulties have arisen, or have been discovered when it was already too late, and the consummation of our hopes is, I am much afraid, postponed to next spring. At first I was knocked down by the unexpected thunderbolt, but I have gradually been reconciled to my fate, and have granted a free and gracious pardon to my friend. As his own apartment,

which afforded me a temporary shelter, is much too narrow for a settled residence, we hired for the winter a convenient ready-furnished apartment in the nearest part of the Rue de Bourg, whose back-door leads in three steps to the terrace and garden, as often as a tolerable day shall tempt us to enjoy their beauties; and this arrangement has even its advantage of giving us time to deliberate and provide before we enter on a larger and more regular establishment. But this is not the sum of my misfortunes; hear, and pity! The day after my arrival (Sunday) we had just finished a very temperate dinner, and intended to begin a round of visits on foot, *chapeau sous le bras*, when, most unfortunately, Deyverdun proposed to show me something in the court; we boldly and successfully ascended a flight of stone steps, but in the descent I missed my footing, and strained, or sprained, my ankle in a painful manner. My old latent enemy (I do not mean the devil), who is always on the watch, has made an ungenerous use of his advantage, and I much fear that my arrival at Lausanne will be marked with a fit of the gout, though it is quite unnecessary that the intelligence or suspicion should find its way to Bath. Yesterday afternoon I lay, or at least sat, in state to receive visits, and at the same moment my room was filled with four different nations. The loudest of these nations was the single voice of the Abbé Raynal, who, like your friend, has chosen this place for the asylum of freedom and history. His conversation, which might be very agreeable, is intolerably loud, peremptory, and insolent; and you would imagine that he alone was the monarch and legislator of the world. Adieu. I embrace my lady and the infants. With regard to the important transactions for which you are constituted plenipotentiary, I expect with some impatience, but with perfect confidence, the result of your labours. You may remember what I mentioned of my conversation with —— about the place of Minister at Berne. I have talked it over with Deyverdun, who does not dislike the idea, provided this place was allowed to be my villa during at least two-thirds of the year; but, for my part, I am sure that . . . . . are worth more than Ministerial friendship and gratitude; so I am inclined to think that they are

preferable to an office which would be procured with difficulty, enjoyed with constraint and expense, and lost, perhaps, next April, in the annual revolutions of our domestic government. Again adieu.

No. CXXXVI.

EDWARD GIBBON, Esq., *to the* Right Hon. LADY SHEFFIELD.

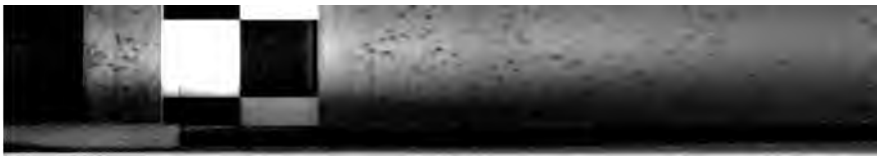
LAUSANNE, *October* 28, 1783.

The progress of my gout is in general so regular, and there is so much uniformity in the history of its decline and fall, that I have hitherto indulged my laziness without much shame or remorse, without supposing that you would be very anxious for my safety, which had been sufficiently provided for by the triple care of my friend Deyverdun, my humbler friend Caplin, and a very conversable physician (not the famous Tissot), whose ordinary fee is ten batz—about fifteenpence English. After the usual increase and decrease of the member—for it has been confined to the injured part—the gout has retired in good order, and the remains of weakness, which obliged me to move on the rugged pavement of Lausanne with a stick, or rather small crutch, are to be ascribed to the sprain, which might have been a much more serious business. As I have now spent a month at Lausanne, you will inquire with much curiosity, more kindness, and some mixture of spite and malignity how far the place has answered my expectations, and whether I do not repent of a resolution which has appeared so rash and ridiculous to my ambitious friends. To this question, however natural and reasonable, I shall not return an immediate answer, for two reasons:—(1.) I have not yet made a fair trial. The disappointment and delay with regard to Deyverdun's house will confine us this winter to lodgings rather convenient than spacious or pleasant. I am only beginning to recover my strength and liberty, and to look about on persons and things. The greatest part of those persons are in the country taken up with their vintage; my books are not yet arrived; and, in short, I cannot look upon myself as settled in that comfortable way which

you and I understand and relish. Yet the weather has been heavenly, and till this time, the end of October, we enjoy the brightness of the sun, and somewhat gently complain of its immoderate heat. (2.) If I should be too sanguine in explaining my satisfaction in what I have done, you would ascribe that satisfaction to the novelty of the scene and the inconstancy of man; and I deem it far more safe and prudent to postpone any positive declaration till I am placed by experience beyond the danger of repentance and recantation. Yet of one thing I am sure, that I possess in this country, as well as in England, the best cordial of life—a sincere, tender, and sensible friend, adorned with the most valuable and pleasant qualities both of the heart and head. The inferior enjoyments of leisure and society are likewise in my power; and in the short excursions which I have hitherto made I have commenced or renewed my acquaintance with a certain number of persons, more especially women (who, at least in France and this country, are undoubtedly superior to our prouder sex), of rational minds and elegant manners. I breakfast alone, and have declared that I receive no visits in a morning, which you will easily suppose is devoted to study. I find it impossible, without inconvenience, to defer my dinner beyond two o'clock. We have got a very good woman cook. Deyverdun, who is somewhat of an Epicurean philosopher, understands the management of a table, and we frequently invite a guest or two to share our luxurious but not extravagant repasts. The afternoons are, and will be much more so hereafter, devoted to society, and I shall find it necessary to play at cards much oftener than in London; but I do not dislike that way of passing a couple of hours, and I shall not be ruined at shilling whist. As yet I have not supped, but in the course of the winter I must sometimes sacrifice an evening abroad, and in exchange I hope sometimes to steal a day at home without going into company

. . . . . .

. . . . . I have all this time been talking to Lord Sheffield. I hope that he has despatched my affairs, and it would give me pleasure to hear that I am no longer member



for Lymington nor lord of Lenborough. Adieu. I feel every day that the distance serves only to make me think with more tenderness of the persons whom I love.

No. CXXXVII.

EDWARD GIBBON, Esq., *to* Mrs. PORTEN.

LAUSANNE, *December* 27, 1783.

DEAR MADAM,—The unfortunate are loud and loquacious in their complaints, but real happiness is content with its own silent enjoyment; and if that happiness is of a quiet, uniform kind, we suffer days and weeks to elapse without communicating our sensations to a distant friend. By you, therefore, whose temper and understanding have extracted from human life on every occasion the best and most comfortable ingredients, my silence will always be interpreted as an evidence of content, and you would only be alarmed—the danger is not at hand—by the too frequent repetition of my letters. Perhaps I should have continued to slumber, I don't know how long, had I not been awakened by the anxiety which you express in your last letter. . . . .

From this base subject I ascend to one which more seriously and strongly engages your thoughts, the consideration of my health and happiness. And you will give me credit when I assure you with sincerity that I have not repented a single moment of the step which I have taken, and that I only regret the not having executed the same design two, or five, or even ten years ago. By this time I might have returned independent and rich to my native country, I should have escaped many disagreeable events that have happened in the meanwhile, and I should have avoided the parliamentary life, which experience has proved to be neither suitable to my temper nor conducive to my fortune. In speaking of the happiness which I enjoy, you will agree with me in giving the preference to a sincere and sensible friend; and though you cannot discern the full extent of his merit, you will easily believe that Deyverdun is the man. Perhaps two

persons so perfectly fitted to live together were never formed by nature and education. We have both read and seen a great variety of objects; the lights and shades of our different characters are happily blended, and a friendship of thirty years has taught us to enjoy our mutual advantages and to support our unavoidable imperfections. In love and marriage some harsh sounds will sometimes interrupt the harmony, and in the course of time, like our neighbours, we must expect some disagreeable moments; but confidence and freedom are the two pillars of our union, and I am much mistaken if the building be not solid and comfortable. One disappointment I have indeed experienced and patiently supported. The family who were settled in Deyverdun's house started some unexpected difficulties, and will not leave it till the spring; so that you must not yet expect any poetical, or even historical, description of the beauties of my habitation. During the dull months of winter we are satisfied with a very comfortable apartment in the middle of the town, and even derive some advantage from this delay, as it gives us time to arrange some plans of alteration and furniture which will embellish our future and more elegant dwelling. In this season I rise, not at four in the morning, but a little before eight; at nine I am called from my study to breakfast, which I always perform alone in the English style, and, with the aid of Caplin, I perceive no difference between Lausanne and Bentinck Street. Our mornings are usually passed in separate studies; we never approach each other's door without a previous message or thrice knocking, and my apartment is already sacred and formidable to strangers. I dress at half-past one, and at two (an early hour, to which I am not perfectly reconciled) we sit down to dinner. We have hired a female cook, well skilled in her profession and accustomed to the taste of every nation; as, for instance, we had excellent mince-pies yesterday. After dinner and the departure of our company—one, two, or three friends—we read together some amusing book, or play at chess, or retire to our rooms, or make visits, or go to the coffee-house. Between six and seven the assemblies begin, and I am oppressed only with their number and

variety. Whist, at shillings or half-crowns, is the game I generally play, and I play three rubbers with pleasure. Between nine and ten we withdraw to our bread and cheese and friendly converse, which sends us to bed at eleven; but these sober hours are too often interrupted by private or numerous suppers, which I have not the courage to resist, though I practise a laudable abstinence at the best-furnished tables. Such is the skeleton of my life; it is impossible to communicate a perfect idea of the vital and substantial parts, the characters of the men and women with whom I have very easily connected myself in looser and closer bonds, according to their inclination and my own. If I do not deceive myself, and if Deyverdun does not flatter me, I am already a general favourite; and as our likings and dislikes are commonly mutual, I am equally satisfied with the freedom and elegance of manners, and, after proper allowances and exceptions, with the worthy and amiable qualities, of many individuals. The autumn has been beautiful and the winter hitherto mild, but in January we must expect some severe frost. Instead of rolling in a coach, I walk the streets wrapped up in a fur cloak; but this exercise is wholesome, and except an accidental fit of the gout of a few days, I never enjoyed better health. I am no longer in Pavillard's house, where I was almost starved with cold and hunger, and you may be assured that I now enjoy every benefit of comfort, plenty, and even decent luxury. You wish me happy; acknowledge that such a life is more conducive to happiness than five nights in the week passed in the House of Commons or five mornings spent at the Custom-House. Send me, in return, a fair account of your own situation in mind and body. I am satisfied your own good sense would have reconciled you to inevitable separation, but there never was a more suitable diversion than your visit to Sheffield Place. Among the innumerable proofs of friendship which I have received from that family there are none which affect me more sensibly than their kind civilities to you, though I am persuaded that they are at least as much on your account as on mine. At length Madame de —— is delivered by her tyrant's death. Her daughter, a valuable woman of this place, has made

some inquiries, and though her own circumstances are narrow, she will not suffer her father's widow to be left totally destitute. I am glad you derived so much melancholy pleasure from the letters, yet had I known it I should have withheld . . . . . .

No. CXXXVIII.

EDWARD GIBBON, Esq., *to* Mrs. GIBBON, Bath.

LAUSANNE, *May* 28, 1784.

DEAR MADAM,—I begin without preface or apology, as if I had received your letter by the last post. In my own defence I know not what to say; but if I were disposed to recriminate, I might observe that you yourself are not perfectly free from the sin of laziness and procrastination. I have often wondered why we are not fonder of letter-writing. We all delight to talk of ourselves, and it is only in letters, in writing to a friend, that we can enjoy that conversation, not only without reproach or interruption, but with the highest propriety and mutual satisfaction; sure that the person whom we address feels an equal, or at least a strong and lively, interest in the consideration of the pleasing subject. On the subject, therefore, of self I will entertain a friend to whom none of my thoughts or actions, none of my pains or pleasures, can ever be indifferent. When I first cherished the design of retiring to Lausanne, I was much more apprehensive of wounding your tender attachment than of offending Lord Sheffield's manly and vehement friendship. In the abolition of the Board of Trade the motives for my retreat became more urgent and forcible; I wished to break loose, yet I delayed above a year before I could take my final resolution; and the letter in which I disclosed it to you cost me one of the most painful struggles of my life. As soon as I had conquered that difficulty all meaner obstacles fell before me, and in a few weeks I found myself at Lausanne, astonished at my firmness and my success. Perhaps you still blame or still lament the step which I have taken. If on your own account I can only sympathise with your feelings, the

recollection of which often costs me a sigh; if on mine, let me fairly state what I have escaped in England and what I have found at Lausanne. Recollect the tempests of this winter; how many anxious days I should have passed—how many noisy, turbulent, hot, unwholesome nights—while my political existence, and that of my friends, was at stake; yet these feeble efforts would have been unavailing; I should have lost my seat in Parliament, and after the extraordinary expense of another year, I must still have pursued the road of Switzerland, unless I had been tempted by some selfish patron, or by Lord S.'s aspiring spirit, to incur a most inconvenient expense for a new seat, and once more, at the beginning of an Opposition, to engage in new scenes of business. As to the immediate prospect of anything like a quiet and profitable retreat, I should not know where to look; my friends are no longer in power. With —— and his party I have no connection; and were he disposed to favour a man of letters, it is difficult to say what he could give or what I would accept; the reign of pensions and sinecures is at an end, and a commission in the Excise or Customs, the summit of my hopes, would give me income at the expense of leisure and liberty. When I revolve these circumstances in my mind, my only regret—I repeat it again and again—is, that I did not embrace this salutary measure three, five, ten years ago. Thus much I thought it necessary to say, and shall now dismiss this unpleasing part of the subject. For my situation here, health is the first consideration, and on that head your tenderness had conceived some degree of anxiety. I know not whether it has reached you that I had a fit of the gout the day after my arrival. The deed is true, but the cause was accidental; carelessly stepping down a flight of stairs, I sprained my ankle, and my ungenerous enemy instantly took advantage of my weakness. But since my breaking that double chain I have enjoyed a winter of the most perfect health that I have perhaps ever known, without any mixture of the little flying incommodities which in my best days have sometimes disturbed the tranquillity of my English life. You are not ignorant of Dr. Tissot's reputation, and his merit is even above his reputation. He

assures me that, in his opinion, the moisture of England and Holland is most pernicious, the dry, pure air of Switzerland most favourable, to a gouty constitution; that experience justifies the theory; and that there are fewer martyrs of that disorder in this than in any other country in Europe. This winter has everywhere been most uncommonly severe, and you seem in England to have had your full share of the general hardship; but in this corner, surrounded by the Alps, it has rather been long than rigorous, and its duration stole away our spring and left us no interval between furs and silks. We now enjoy the genial influence of the climate and the season, and no station was ever more calculated to enjoy them than Deyverdun's house and garden, which are now become my own. You will not expect that the pen should describe what the pencil would imperfectly delineate. A few circumstances may, however, be mentioned. My library is about the same size with that in Bentinck Street, with this difference, however, that, instead of looking on a paved court twelve feet square, I command a boundless prospect of vale, mountain, and water from my three windows. My apartment is completed by a spacious light closet or store-room, with a bedchamber and dressing-room. Deyverdun's habitation is pleasant and convenient, though less extensive; for our common use we have a very handsome winter apartment of four rooms, and on the ground-floor two cool saloons for the summer, with a sufficiency, or rather superfluity of offices, &c. A terrace one hundred yards long extends beyond the front of the house, and leads to a close, impenetrable shrubbery, and from thence the circuit of a long and various walk carries me round a meadow and vineyard. The intervals afford abundant supply of fruit and every sort of vegetables; and if you add that this villa, which has been much ornamented by my friend, touches the best and most sociable part of the town, you will agree with me that few persons, either princes or philosophers, enjoy a more desirable residence. Deyverdun, who is proud of his own works, often walks me round, pointing out, with acknowledgment and enthusiasm, the beauties that change with every step and with every variation of light. I

share, or at least I sympathise with, his pleasure. He appears contented with my progress, and has already told several people that he does not despair of making me a gardener. Be that as it may, you will be glad to hear that I am, by my own choice, infinitely more in motion and in the open air than I ever have been formerly; yet my perfect liberty and leisure leave me many studious hours, and as the circle of our acquaintance retire into the country, I shall be much less engaged in company and diversion. I have seriously resumed the prosecution of my History; each day and each month adds something to the completion of the great work. The progress is slow, the labour continual, and the end remote and uncertain; yet every day brings its amusement as well as labour; and though I dare not fix a term even in my own fancy, I advance with the pleasing reflection that the business of publication, should I be detained here so long, must enforce my return to England and restore me to the best of mothers and friends. In the meanwhile, with health and competence, a full independence of mind and action, a delightful habitation, a true friend, and many pleasant acquaintance, you will allow that I am rather an object of envy than of pity; and if you were more conversant with the use of the French language, I would seriously propose to you to repose yourself with us in this fine country. My indirect intelligence, on which I sometimes depend with more implicit faith than on the kind dissimulation of your friendship, gives me reason to hope that the last winter has been more favourable to your health than the preceding one. Assure me of it yourself honestly and truly, and you will afford me one of the most lively pleasures.

No. CXXXIX.

EDWARD GIBBON, Esq., *to the* Right Hon. LORD SHEFFIELD.

LAUSANNE, *May* 10, 1786.

By the difference, I suppose, of the post of France and Germany, Sir Stanier's letter, though first written, is still on the road, and

yours, which I received yesterday morning, brought me the first account of poor Mrs. Porten's departure. There are few events that could afflict more deeply, and I have been ever since in a state of mind more deserving of your pity than of your reproaches. I certainly am not ignorant that we have nothing better to wish for ourselves than the fate of that best-humoured woman, as you very justly style her; a good understanding and an excellent heart, with health, spirits, and a competency to live in the midst of her friends till the age of fourscore, and then shut her eyes without pain or remorse. Death can have deprived her only of some years of weakness, perhaps of misery; and, for myself, it is surely less painful to lose her at present than to find her in my visit to England next year sinking under the weight of age and infirmities, and perhaps forgetful of herself and of the persons once the dearest to her. All this is perfectly true; but all these reflections will not dispel a thousand sad and tender remembrances that rush upon my mind. To her care I am indebted in earliest infancy for the preservation of my life and health. I was a puny child, neglected by my mother, starved by my nurse, and of whose being very little care or expectation was entertained; without her maternal vigilance I should either have been in my grave, or imperfectly lived a crooked, rickety monster, a burden to myself and others. To her instructions I owe the first rudiments of knowledge, the first exercise of reason, and a taste for books, which is still the pleasure and glory of my life; and though she taught me neither language nor science, she was certainly the most useful preceptor I ever had. As I grew up, an intercourse of thirty years endeared her to me as the faithful friend and agreeable companion. You have seen with what freedom and confidence we lived together, and have often admired her character and conversation, which could alike please the young and the old. All this is now lost—finally, irrecoverably lost! I will agree with my lady that the immortality of the soul is at some times a very comfortable doctrine. A thousand thanks to her for her constant kind attention to that poor woman who is no more. I wish I had as much to applaud and as

little to reproach in my own behaviour towards Mrs. Porten since I left England; and when I reflect that my letters would have soothed and comforted her decline, I feel more deeply than I can express the real neglect and seeming indifference of my silence. To delay a letter from the Wednesday to the Saturday, and then from the Saturday to the Wednesday, appears a very slight offence; yet in the repetition of such delay weeks, months, and years will elapse, till the omission may become irretrievable and the consequence mischievous or fatal. After a long lethargy I had roused myself last week, and wrote to the three old ladies; my letter for Mrs. Porten went away last post, Saturday night, and yours did not arrive till Monday morning. Sir Stanier will probably open it, and read the true picture of my sentiments for a friend who, when I wrote, was already extinct. There is something sad and awful in the thought; yet, on the whole, I am not sorry that even this tardy epistle preceded my knowledge of her death. But it did not precede, you will observe, the information of her dangerous and declining state, which I conveyed in my last letter, and her anxious concern that she should never see or hear from me again. This idea, and the hard thoughts which you must entertain of me, press so much on my mind, that I must frankly acknowledge a strange, inexcusable supineness, on which I desire you would make no comment, and which in some measure may account for my delays in corresponding with you. The unpleasant nature of business, and the apprehension of finding something disagreeable, tempted me to postpone from day to day, not only the answering, but even the opening your penultimate epistle; and when I received your last yesterday morning the seal of the former was still unbroken. Oblige me so far as to make no reflections; my own may be of service to me hereafter. Thus far, except the last sentence, I have run on with a sort of melancholy pleasure, and find my heart much relieved by unfolding it to a friend. And the subject so strongly holds me, so much disqualifies me for other discourse, either serious or pleasant, that here I would willingly stop, and reserve all miscellaneous matter for a second volunteer epistle. But we

both know how frail are promises, how dangerous are delays, and there are some pecuniary objects on which I think it necessary to give you an immediate, though now tardy, explanation.

I do not return you any formal thanks for . . . . .

. . . . . .

I have really a hundred things to say of myself, of you and co., of your works, of mine, of my books in Downing Street, of Lausanne, of politics, &c. &c. After this some epistolary debts must and shall be paid; and to proceed with order, I have fixed this day fortnight, May 25th, for the date and despatch of your second epistle. Give me credit once more. Pray does my lady think herself absolved from all obligation of writing to me? To her at least I am not in arrear. Adieu.

THE END.

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